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PART GAME -
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Are YOU brave enough to face the terrifying Spider Demon?

MAY YOUR STAMINA
NEVER FAIL!

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TOMB OF THE GOLDEN SKULL

IAN LIVINGSTONE

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YOU ARE THE HERO

TOMB OF THE GOLDEN SKULL

IAN LIVINGSTONE

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TOMB
— OF THE —
GOLDEN SKULL

Illustrated by Karl Kopinski

IAN LIVINGSTONE

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HOW WILL YOU START YOUR ADVENTURE?

The book you hold in your hands is a gateway to another world – a world of dark magic, terrifying monsters, brooding castles, treacherous dungeons and untold danger, where a noble few defend against the myriad schemes of the forces of evil. Welcome to the world of **FIGHTING FANTASY!**

You are about to embark upon a thrilling fantasy adventure in which **YOU** are the hero! **YOU** decide which route to take, which dangers to risk and which creatures to fight. But be warned – it will also be **YOU** who has to live or die by the consequences of your actions.

Take heed, for success is by no means certain, and you may well fail in your mission on your first attempt. But have no fear, for with experience, skill and luck, each new attempt should bring you a step closer to your ultimate goal.

Prepare yourself, for when you turn the page you will enter an exciting, perilous **FIGHTING FANTASY** adventure where every choice is yours to make, an adventure in which **YOU ARE THE HERO!**

How would you like to begin your adventure?

IF YOU ARE NEW TO FIGHTING FANTASY . . .

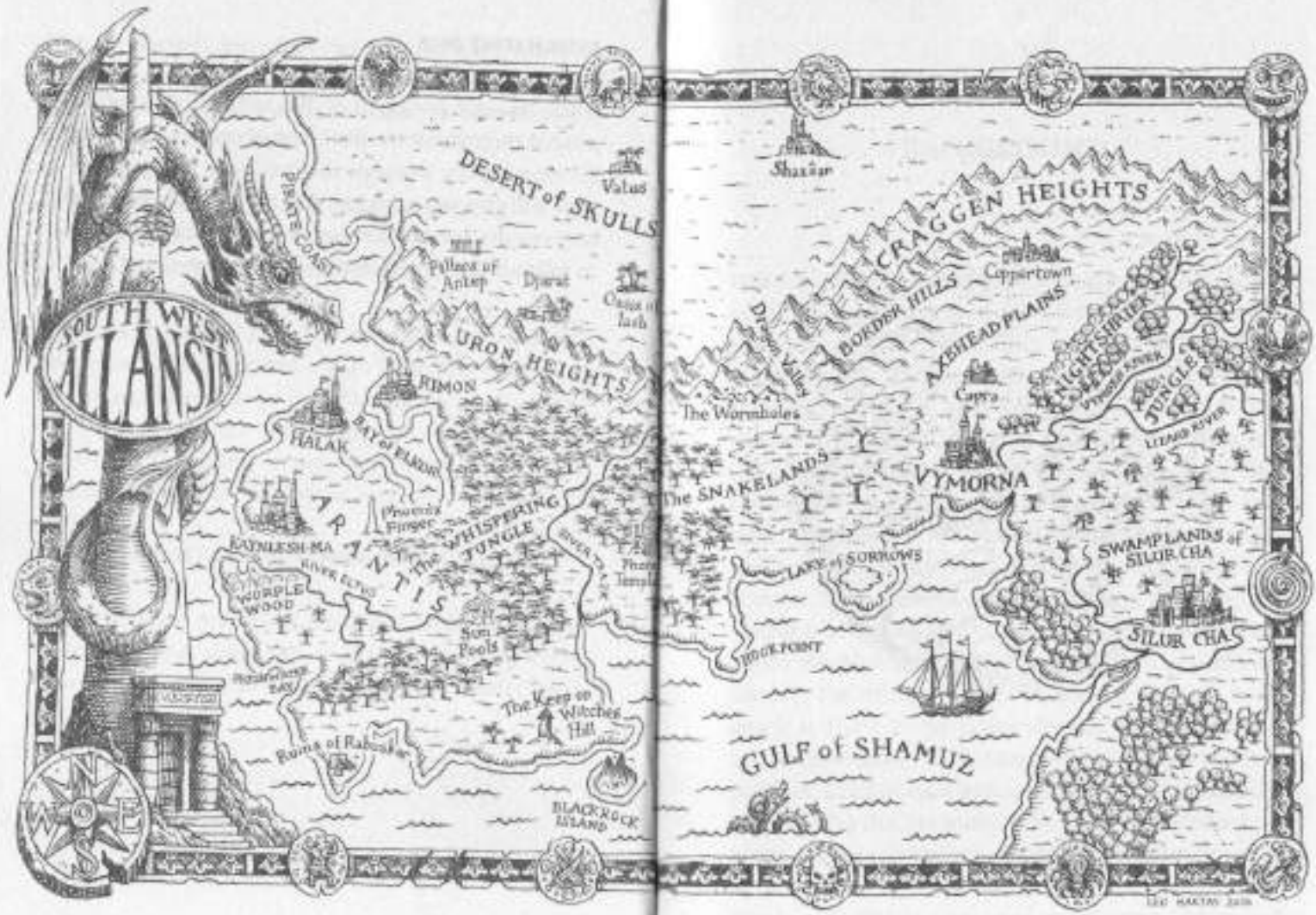
It's a good idea to read the rules before you start, on pages 245–253. When you're done and have your *Adventure Sheet* ready, read the Background (pages 13–16) and then turn the page to read section **1**. Follow its instructions and make choices as appropriate, moving on to a new numbered section as directed.

IF YOU HAVE PLAYED FIGHTING FANTASY BEFORE . . .

You can create your own character by following the instructions on pages 245–253. Don't forget to enter your character's details on the *Adventure Sheet* (pages 254–267).

ALTERNATIVE DICE

If you do not have a pair of dice to hand, dice rolls are printed throughout the book at the bottom of the pages. Flicking rapidly through the book and stopping on a page will give you a random dice roll. If you need to 'roll' only one die, use the number on the first die. If you need to roll two dice, use the total of both dice.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Valus
Pirate Coast
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HALAK
Bay of Farrow
Phoenix Finger
ATLANTIS
the WHISPERING JUNGLE
RAYNESH-MA
PURPLE WOOD
River Estro
Sun Pools
Temple of Phoenix
The Keep of Witches Hill
Ruins of Rabcadia
BLACK ROCK ISLAND
Shazzar
CRAGGEN HEIGHTS
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AXEHEAD PLAINS
Dragon Valley
The Wormholes
Capra
KNIGHTSHRIEK
Dragon River
JUNGLE
LIZARD RIVER
The SNAKELANDS
VYMORNA
LAKE of SORROWS
SWAMPLANDS of SILUR CHA
SILUR CHA
GULF of SHAMUZ

BACKGROUND

YOU are a fearless adventurer who braves the dangers of Allansia in search of fabled treasure. You keep your gold in a chest hidden in a cave near Bone Bay, but when you last went there, you found the chest smashed open and your gold gone. You track the thieves to Port Blacksand, the lawless city that festers like an open wound at the mouth of Catfish River. But the thieves had planned on you following them and were lying in wait. They had bribed the city guards, and you were thrown in jail for a crime you did not commit. Now you find yourself standing on a wooden platform in the middle of the town square with your hands shackled behind your back, about to be sold into slavery. Squinting against the midday sun, you look down at the corrupt town officials and sly-looking rogues assembled below. Alongside you stands another prisoner, a tall woman with long, wavy auburn hair and a wooden leg that protrudes from under her faded velvet gown. She has fire in her eyes and is being held by two burly guards. When the bids for her are called out, she curses and spits at the crowd in defiance. The crowd

responds with jeers, which makes the woman rage even more. Seething with anger, she stamps down on the foot of one of the guards with her wooden leg, which makes him cry out in pain. 'Good on yer lady! I like yer fightin' spirit. I'll bid nine Gold Pieces for yer,' shouts a portly, gap-toothed Pirate captain, the shiny brass buttons on his grubby waistcoat looking as though they are about to fly off. 'You are going to enjoy life on board the *Black Pearl*, swabbing the decks and swilling out the privies!' he scoffs, scratching his stubbly chin with his podgy fingers. 'Going once, going twice, are you all done? Sold! Peggy Wellow to Captain Shanklin for nine Gold Pieces,' booms the auctioneer, striking his gavel down on his rickety wooden lectern. 'Take her away.' And with that, the angry woman is led away by the gloating Pirate to the cheers of the crowd. Your name is called out next. 'What am I bid for this gold thief?' asks the auctioneer. 'That so-called gold thief is not for sale,' a deep voice booms out from the back of the crowd. 'I have in my hand a pardon signed by Lord Azzur himself.' All heads turn and the crowd gasps. A wise-looking man with a lined face and a long beard walks slowly through the crowd in his flowing white robes towards the wooden platform, his presence causing a buzz in the crowd. 'Blistering Bloodbeasts, it's Nicodemus!' a man calls out excitedly. The reclusive old wizard hadn't been seen in years. They say that he lives in a small wooden hut somewhere in Port

Blacksand, but few know where. Nicodemus hands the pardon to the auctioneer who immediately instructs the guards to set you free. You jump down from the platform and walk over to the wizard to thank him. Before you can speak, he puts his finger to his lips and says, 'Not now. I know who you are, and I know you are innocent. We must leave immediately. There is no time to lose. Follow me.'

Without another word said, the wizard hurries out of the town square and leads you down to the harbour where three sailing ships are moored, including the *Black Pearl*. Nicodemus hands you a backpack containing provisions and a flask of water, and says in a low voice, 'Your pardon is a forgery. Lord Azzur knows nothing about it. I freed you to send you on a mission of utmost importance. Your bravery and valour are well known and the reason why I chose you. Yesterday, the grand wizard Yaztromo's crow arrived here with a note, a most alarming note I should add. What was thought would never happen has happened. There has been an awakening. The Spider Demon Valmorka has risen from the Abyss. She was seen in Dragon Valley before entering the Wormhole caves. Yaztromo believes she has returned to lay her eggs in the cave and infect them with a parasitic fungus, so they hatch out as Plague Spiders. Hundreds of them. Perhaps thousands of them. She will control an army

of Plague Spiders with her formidable mental powers and lead them across Allansia to infect us all. She must be stopped.' The old wizard senses your unease and says calmly, 'Fear not, Valmorka can be defeated, and you are the one to do it. I have the utmost faith in you. Can we count on you?'

Your mind starts to spin. How could you alone defeat a Spider Demon and an army of Plague Spiders? It seems an impossible task but knowing the fate of Allansia rests on your shoulders, you have no choice but to say yes to Nicodemus.

'Marvellous,' he says, shaking your hand vigorously. 'I knew you would accept the challenge. I would join you, but I am old and would only slow you down. You must slay Valmorka and her Plague Spiders in the coming days before they are fully grown. If you succeed on your mission, Allansia will thank you. If you fail, we are all doomed. But let's not dwell on that. A ship is ready to set sail to take you south to Kaynlesh-Ma from where you must journey inland. Here, take these twenty gold coins. You might need them. The thieves who stole your gold have been thrown into jail and I'll see to it that your gold is returned to you – after you return,' he says with a wry smile, dropping 20 Gold Pieces into your hand.

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS!

MAY YOUR STAMINA NEVER FAIL!

NOW TURN OVER...

1

You follow Nicodemus along the quayside to where the twin-masted wooden ship *Barracuda* is moored. Its sails are square-rigged, and there are four cannons protruding from its side portholes. Next to the *Barracuda* lies a smaller ship, the *Black Pearl*, where you see Peggy Wellow hard at work swabbing the top deck. She glances down and looks very surprised to see you. 'What are you doing here? I never thought I'd see you again!' she calls out, waving. 'Did Captain Shanklin buy you too? We're sailing to Fire Island this afternoon. Are you joining us?' Before you can answer, Nicodemus stands in front of you. 'You must board the *Barracuda* immediately. You know the importance of this mission,' he says staring you fiercely in the eye. 'The captain is ready to cast off. He has been well paid to take you to Kaynlesh-Ma.' If you want to board the *Barracuda*, turn to **66**. If you want to board the *Black Pearl* to talk to Peggy Wellow, turn to **336**.

2

You try to plug the leak but cannot stop the boat from sinking. You swim slowly to the shore and crawl out of the sea. You take off your backpack to dry out and are annoyed to discover that all your *Provisions* disintegrated in the sea. Delete them from your *Adventure Sheet*. You take a sip of water from your flask and head north along the coast towards the estuary. You soon arrive at the mouth of the river and walk on along the riverbank until you come to a bamboo hut with a roof made of long, broad leaves. There are two woven baskets either side of the open door, and a raft tied to a small pontoon on the river. If you want to walk on past the hut, turn to **49**. If you want to call out to see if there is anybody inside the hut, turn to **166**.

3

The Hill Giant hurls the rock straight at you, but you are unable to jump out of the way in time. It thumps into your chest, knocking you off your feet. Lose 4 STAMINA points. If you are still alive, you drag yourself up to defend yourself against the raging Hill Giant who bears down on you, swinging his huge sword.

HILL GIANT *SKILL 10* *STAMINA 12*

If you win, turn to **181**.

4

You spin the coin in the air and watch it drop into the pool and sink to the bottom. The old man leans on his stick and stands up slowly. 'Thank you,' he says, smiling. 'That was very generous of you. A gift to me merits a gift to you. I'd like you to have my lucky charm. It has served me well over the years, but I no longer have need of it.' The old man unclasps a silver chain from around his neck on which hangs a silver snake-headed charm and hands it to you. You feel you can trust the old man and fasten the chain around your own neck. You are wearing a Silver Serpent, a charm with magic properties. Gain 1 LUCK point. You thank the old man for his gift and ask him where the streets lead to. 'Going back the way you came takes you back to the harbour. If you turn left and head north, you will come to the Grand Library. If you go straight on, you will end up at the market. Turning right will take you down to the boat moorings on the River Eltus.' If you want to go to the Grand Library, turn to **241**. If you want to go to the market, turn to **290**. If you want to go down to the river, turn to **263**.

You are greeted by a frail-looking old man with a bushy beard.

5

The fisherman looks annoyed but says nothing. He glances at his spear lying in the boat but doesn't reach for it. He pulls up the anchor and sets sail, steering the boat directly back to the pebble beach. He gestures to you to get out of his boat as soon as it lands on the shore and begins laying out his fishing net on the beach to carry on the repair work. He suddenly looks up at a raven flying by overhead and glances at you with a sinister smile slowly spreading across his face. A shiver runs down your spine. You have been cursed. Lose 1 SKILL point and 1 LUCK point. He looks away and carries on repairing his nets in silence. You decide to leave him be and set off east again, and eventually reach the east coast of Arantis. Seeing nothing of interest, you decide to head north along the shoreline. Turn to **236**.

6

You hear footsteps coming to the door and somebody say in a gruff voice, 'All right! All right! I'm coming!' The door opens and you are greeted by a frail-looking old man with a bushy beard and a big leather hat. He has an ornately engraved horn hanging around his neck on a leather string. 'Yes?' he asks curtly. If you want to ask him about the horn, turn to **137**. If you want to ask him if he knows where you might find a Dragonblade, turn to **255**.

7

The Guards are well trained in spear throwing. Three spears thump into your back with fatal consequences. Your adventure ends here.

8

The woman looks at you suspiciously and says, 'Just passing by, eh? So, what do you want? Be quick. I've no time for time wasters.' If you want to reply that you are looking to buy things that could help you defeat the Spider Demon, turn to **175**. If you want to reply that you are looking to buy a Dragonblade, turn to **276**.

9

The brass number fits snugly into the recess in the handle and the warhammer immediately starts to glow brighter. You hold it above your head with both hands and swing it forcefully down on to the cavern floor. The noise of the warhammer striking the floor is deafening. You hear a low, rumbling sound followed by a grating noise and look up to see a huge crack appear in the ceiling causing loose stones to fall down on to the Spider eggs. The rumbling sound grows louder, and you decide to make a run for it. You hear a loud crash behind you, and you are engulfed by a cloud of dust as the cavern ceiling collapses, crushing all the Spider eggs. You set off immediately for Rimon and catch a boat to Port Blacksand to tell Nicodemus the good news. Turn to **400**.

10

The women stop arguing and turn to face you. 'Hello, darlin'. What brings you to Kaynlesh-Ma?' one of them says cheekily through a gap-toothed smile. You decide to tell her that you have come to Kaynlesh-Ma to buy equipment for a dangerous quest. 'A dangerous quest, eh? Get you! Well, if it's big swords you're lookin' for, I'm the one to ask. But it will cost yer 1 Gold Piece to find out!' If you want to pay to hear what she has to say, turn to **306**. If you want to decline her offer and walk over to the bearded men, turn to **373**. If you want to walk past them and carry on up the street, turn to **228**.

11

On seeing the others defeated, the third Bandit frantically paddles his canoe back towards the shore. You look in the sea but there is no sign of Pinn, and you fear he has been eaten by a sea creature. You take hold of the rudder and steer a north-westerly course towards land. You sail along the rocky coast until you

find a suitable spot to land the boat. You gather your belongings and walk north along the coast towards the estuary. When you arrive at the mouth of the river, you see a raft tied to a pontoon and, next to it, a bamboo hut with a roof made of long, broad leaves. There are two woven baskets outside the open front door. If you want to walk on past the hut, turn to **49**. If you want to call out to see if there is anybody inside the hut, turn to **166**.

12

You cannot stop yourself from falling off your horse, and you land sprawling on the ground. The Wild Dogs attack you from all sides with their long teeth tearing at your flesh. Lose 3 STAMINA points. You struggle to stand up but manage to draw your sword and fend off the Dogs and attack the leader of the pack.

WILD DOG	*SKILL 6*	*STAMINA 5*

If you win, turn to **371**.

13

The pouch is crawling with red ants that run up your arm and bite you repeatedly, leaving itchy welts. You ignore the pain and open the pouch and find 10 Gold Pieces, a small glass bottle filled with blue liquid, and a piece of folded-up paper. You pocket the Gold Pieces and unfold the paper, which has a message written on it that reads, 'Beware the Rotting Flesh Ants. If bitten, drink this potion.' If you want to drink the contents of the bottle, turn to **90**. If you want to keep going inland, turn to **210**. If you want to return to the fisherman's boat, turn to **350**.

14

The man's eyebrows raise, and his expression softens. 'I certainly do know somebody,' he says smiling. 'Me! My friend Algeron here and I buy and sell magic rings. Do you have a particular type in mind?' You reply that you want to buy a Ring of Fire. 'Ah, I'm afraid I can't help you. I sold the only one I had to Sylas the town crier yesterday.' You are about to walk away when Algeron suddenly blurts out, 'Hold your horses! You might be in luck. Here comes Sylas now!' he says, pointing up the street. Turn to **228**.

15

You climb out of the river and are horrified to see that your legs are covered with large blood-sucking MUD WORMS that are burrowing into your legs with their tiny hook-like teeth. If you possess a bag of salt, turn to **260**. If you do not have any salt, turn to **388**.

16

You sneak around the corner unnoticed and hurry down the street. Turn to **263**.

17

Thawne looks at you intently, unsure whether or not to believe you. With the cave entrance now just a few hundred metres away, he stops and says brusquely, 'This is as far as I go.' He walks off in the direction of Dragon Valley, leaving you on your own to enter the cave. Turn to **92**.

18

The Treeman stands motionless with its eyes closed. You notice there is a small hollow in its trunk just above head height. If you want to reach into the hollow, turn to **375**. If you would rather press on south, turn to **229**.

19

The Goblins shrug their shoulders and admit that they do not know where to find magic rings. You decide not to waste any more time with them and walk over to the bar to talk to the barman. Turn to **235**.

20

Your sleep is disturbed by howling animals, but the night passes without incident. You wake soon after dawn feeling refreshed and ready for the next challenge. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You gather up your belongings and set off at a brisk pace heading south-east across the plain. You pass by an abandoned bivouac made from sticks and animal skins that is covered with dust and sand. You look inside but find nothing of use. You walk on and eventually see the coast away to your right and a river tributary on your left that appears to feed into the River Eltus. In the far distance you can see a dense line of trees that looks like light jungle terrain. You stop for a minute to think about which way to go when a large shadow passes over you. You look up to see a hot-air balloon slowly descend and watch it land with a bump on the dusty plain ahead. A man with a long white beard waves at you from his wicker basket and shouts, 'If you want a ride, jump in now. I can't keep this old gas bag on the ground for long.' If you want to jump in the basket, turn to **222**. If you want to turn down his offer, turn to **307**.

It's a wounded Warrior holding his bloodied sword with arrows sticking out of his back.

21

Walking across the dusty plain you see nothing move except for small lizards and snakes that scurry away and hide under bushes and rocks when you get close. You make good progress, but the further south you go, the rockier it becomes. You clamber over the top of a rocky hillock and see somebody approaching on horseback. It's a wounded Warrior holding his bloodied sword with arrows sticking out of his back. If you want to call out to him, turn to **282**. If you want to hide and let him ride by, turn to **40**.

22

As you walk along, you catch sight of something metallic in the long grass. It's a small silver flask. You unscrew the top and see that it contains an amber-coloured liquid that smells smoky. The words 'Good Health!' are etched in tiny lettering on the base of the flask. If you want to drink the liquid, turn to **87**. If you would rather put the flask in your backpack and carry on walking, turn to **163**.

23

You are dazzled by the bright sunlight when you emerge from the jungle on to a long, white-sand beach where you see a small, single-masted boat straight ahead of you that has been left abandoned. Looking left along the coast, you see the wide estuary of a river, which runs into the sea from the north, and beyond that, you can see a mountain range in the far distance. Looking right, you can just make out what could be a stone tower a long way south. Knowing your destiny lies in the mountains further north, you decide against heading south. If you want to head north towards the estuary, turn to **192**. If you want to inspect the boat, turn to **124**.

24

You poke around the debris with your sword and find a rusty iron ball no bigger than a coin and a leather wristband strung with animal teeth. You pocket the iron ball and inspect the wristband. If you want to put on the wristband, turn to **107**. If you want to throw it away and carry on walking, turn to **303**.

25

The man lifts the lid partially and holds out the tin. 'Got to keep the lid on to keep the pies warm,' he says with a smile. 'You are not going to believe how delicious these pies are.' You reach inside the tin and immediately feel a sharp pain on the back of your hand. You pull your hand back out and see blood coming from two punctures in the skin where you have been bitten by a venomous SNAKE. The man bursts out laughing, slams the lid on the tin and runs off up the street, leaving you to nurse your painful wound. Lose 3 STAMINA points. If you want to chase after the man, turn to **341**. If you want to go in the inn to find the cloaked men, turn to **268**. If you want to walk east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

26

You look at your compass and realize that you have drifted north and are heading in the wrong direction. You turn and head east. You soon pass by moss-covered stone idols of snake-headed people and winged creatures, and walk on, crouched down and treading softly, sword in hand. Turn to **367**.

27

You cut down a long vine from a nearby tree and throw one end of it to the woman who ties it around her waist. Holding on to it with both hands, she tells you to pull hard. You heave on the vine with the woman grimacing in pain. She suddenly shrieks and falls forward with a splash as you fall backwards on to the ground. Free at last, she wades out of the pool. 'Thank you for your kindness,' she says softly. 'I became trapped while I was searching for my mother's gold bracelet given to her by my father, which she lost in the Sun Pools many years ago. Luckily, I found it! And thanks to you, I am able to return it to her. Please accept this small gift as a token of my gratitude. It will bring you luck.' She unpins a gold horseshoe brooch from her clothing and pins it on to your shirt, scratching your skin as she does. 'Sorry! I didn't mean to do that. Please forgive me,' she says apologetically. 'But I really must go now. Thank you again and farewell.' She hugs you and walks off, heading north-west. She is soon out of sight, and you turn and head east. Turn to **292**.

28

You roll over and over in a ball of dust and hit your head on a rock before coming to a stop. You lie there unconscious, vulnerable to all creatures or robbers nearby. Lose 1 SKILL point and 4 STAMINA points. If you are still alive, *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **84**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **128**.

29

The old man sighs and stands up. 'Don't worry about it,' he says, looking disappointed. 'I just thought I'd ask. Goodbye.' You watch him shuffle off and you decide what to do. If you want to turn left to head north, turn to **241**. If you want to keep on walking east, turn to **290**. If you want to turn right and head south, turn to **263**.

30

You empty your pockets but cannot find anything to use to pick the lock. Time passes and your frustration grows. It starts to get dark, and feeling exhausted after a long day spent walking, you lie down on the floor to get some rest and fall asleep. Turn **249**.

31

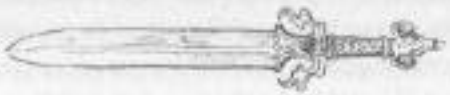
Yash gets back on his horse and says, 'I find it hard to understand why you don't want to come with us to Halak. Nicodemus would not have sent us to find you without good reason. But if that is your decision, so be it.' If you want to change your mind and ride to Halak, turn to **54**. If you want to reply that you intend to carry on walking east, turn to **339**.

32

After paying the Medicine Man 2 Gold Pieces, he goes inside and comes out again moments later with a mug of steaming tea, which he hands to you with a smile. You sip the brown liquid slowly, which has a sweet taste. Mallow Bark tea has long-lasting healing properties. Gain 2 STAMINA points. After finishing it off, he hands you a bulbous Arrika Root, pink and white in colour, and tells you to bite off small pieces of it and chew them slowly. The root is fibrous and tastes bitter, but he encourages you to carry on chewing it. He thanks you for your custom and you set off again, walking north along the west bank of the river. Turn to **49**.

33

The fisherman pulls the anchor up and sets sail. During the trip, he tells you his name is Pinn and entertains you with exaggerated tales about his life at sea. You decide to tell him about your mission and ask him if he knows where to find Arrika Root. He slaps his hand on his thigh and says, 'I do! Talk to the Medicine Man who lives near the river estuary. You'll recognize his hut by the two large woven baskets outside the front door.' You are not far from land when you see a canoe coming from the shore straight towards you. There are three men in the canoe, two paddling, and another aiming a bow at you. 'Sea Bandits!' shouts Pinn in panic. Before he can utter another word, an arrow thumps into his chest, and you watch him fall backwards into the sea and disappear under the water. You drop down into the boat to take cover and see Pinn's spear lying nearby. You grab hold of it and peek over the side of the boat. The Bandits are closing in fast and are only a few metres away. You jump up and hurl the spear at the Bandit holding the bow. Roll two dice. If the total rolled is the same or less than your SKILL score, turn to **95**. If the total rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **234**.



34

The man relaxes and says, 'Well, you've come to the right place. My friend Gorku here has some magic rings for sale, haven't you, Gorku?' The man next to him pulls a small leather purse out of his pocket and empties the contents into his hand. There are three gold rings, each one set with a precious stone. 'These are the best magic rings money can buy,' boasts Gorku as he slips one with a ruby on to his little finger and waggles it. 'This one is a Ring of Fire. The ruby signifies the flames. The one with the emerald is a Ring of Storms, and the one inset with the diamond is a Ring of Ice. They cost 3 Gold Pieces each if you are interested?' If you want to buy a ring, turn to **328**. If you do not want to buy a ring, you can either enter the inn (turn to **184**) or walk up the cobbled street (turn to **89**).

35

The Barbarian doesn't speak until he is free when he asks you for a drink of water. You hand him your flask and watch him drain the contents. 'Thank you,' he says in a deep voice. He tells you his name is Thawne and that he was on his way to Dragon Valley when he was ambushed by an Orc raiding party. You tell him you are on your way to the Wormholes. 'Then I will join you since it's on my way.

Do you have a spare weapon you could give me?' There is a hint of a smile on his face when you hand over the weapon and he relaxes a little. As you journey north, he tells you he competes in dangerous tournaments for money. 'My brother also competed and lost an eye in one tournament. Despite his enormous strength he perished in the Trial of Champions in Fang. He was a brave man and I would like to know how he died. Have you ever been to Fang?' If you want to say 'yes', turn to **301**. If you want to say 'no', turn to **88**.

36

Standing close to the pinnacle, you are just able to decipher that it is an edifice called the Phoenix Finger wherein Rivel the Demon Prince is entombed. You hear a faint hissing sound and notice an unpleasant smell, which gradually gets stronger. It's a smell like rotten eggs. You back away from the pinnacle but can't seem to get the terrible stench out of your nostrils. You begin to choke and fall to your knees, gasping for air, and soon pass out. You triggered a trap and have inhaled the Breath of the Demon. You wake up some time later alarmed to see that your fingernails have turned black. You stand up slowly feeling groggy. The demon's breath gas that escaped from the pinnacle is poisonous. Lose 1 SKILL point and 4 STAMINA points. If you are still alive, you take in some big breaths of fresh air and head into the Whispering Jungle. Turn to **304**.

37

You walk into the mine and see a message chalked on the wall that says, 'Gold's gone and we've gone'. You walk down the torchlit tunnel and see piles of skulls all along it, both human and non-human. You go as far as you can to where the tunnel is blocked off by a rockfall, and you have no choice but to turn around and go back. Still baffled by why the Goblin was smashing the skulls, you set off again, heading east. Turn to **254**.

38

You trip over the bucket, sending it clattering down the alleyway as you land heavily on the ground, spraining your wrist. Lose 2 STAMINA points. A wooden door opens on the left and you see the town crier there looking to find out who is making the noise. He sees you and asks you what you are doing. You reply that you jumped in the horse trough to escape from the Giant Hornets and

would like to speak to him. He relaxes and invites you into his house, saying, 'Those infernal Hornets keep coming back here terrorizing the place. Poor old Kevan the carpenter was stung to death last week. Horrible it was. Anyway, they are gone for now. I should introduce myself. My name is Sylas. Sit yourself down by the fire and dry yourself out. Perhaps a currant bun would cheer you up? My sister baked them. Delicious they are.' If you would like to eat a currant bun, turn to **120**. If you want to reply that you are not hungry, turn to **157**.

39

When the door closes, you drop 2 Gold Pieces into the slot and watch it open again a few moments later. The woman thrusts her arm through the gap with her hand holding a small stoppered bottle containing green liquid. 'Here, take it,' she says impatiently. You grab the bottle and the woman withdraws her arm and slams the door shut. You uncork the bottle and sniff the liquid, which is odourless. You take a deep breath and gulp down the contents. The liquid feels warm as it trickles down your throat, and you feel suddenly full of energy. Gain 4 STAMINA points. Feeling revitalized, you bound down the steps and head east. Turn to **190**.

40

You crouch down and watch the Warrior ride by slowly, grimacing in pain. He is soon out of sight, and you continue your journey south. After a while you begin to sense that you are being followed. You spin around several times as you walk along but do not see anybody creeping up behind you. The first arrow that hits you catches you completely by surprise. You see it sticking out of your shoulder and wonder how it happened. The second arrow sinks painfully into your midriff. You turn around and see four hooded OUTLAWS in long sand-coloured robes closing in on you on foot. Their loaded bows are pointed straight at you, and the third arrow to hit you is fatal. Your adventure ends here.

41

You try to sidestep out of the way of the lunging Snake, but you are too slow and it sinks its long fangs into your leg. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You must fight the GIANT SNAKE.

GIANT SNAKE	*SKILL 7*	*STAMINA 11*

If the Giant Snake wins two *Attack Rounds* in succession, turn to **349**. If you win without losing two *Attack Rounds* in succession, turn to **101**.

42

If you did not lose an *Attack Round* fighting the Shark, turn to **204**. If you lost one or more *Attack Rounds* fighting the Shark, a giant RAZOR SHARK is attracted by the smell of blood and propels itself towards you. You must fight it with your *Attack Strength* reduced by 2 during each *Attack Round*.

RAZOR SHARK	*SKILL 9*	*STAMINA 8*

If you win, turn to **204**.

43

Fighting the PIRATES without a weapon is not going to be easy. Lose 2 LUCK points. You manage to wriggle free from the Pirates' grip, but you must fight them barehanded one at a time. Reduce your *Attack Strength* by 3 during each *Attack Round*.

	SKILL	*STAMINA*
First PIRATE	7	6
Second PIRATE	6	7

If you win, turn to **82**. You may *Escape* after defeating one of the Pirates by running down the gangplank (turn to **275**).

44

You reach through the cell door bars and slip the key into the keyhole and turn it. Turn to **269**.

45

The boatman pulls hard on his oars, and it doesn't take long to reach the opposite bank. You climb out of the boat and wave goodbye to the boatman. You head into the woods where the trees are mostly oak and elm. There are mushrooms everywhere and you decide to spend a few minutes picking some to put in your backpack. You walk on and see a small stone cottage in the clearing ahead. If you want to knock on the door of the cottage, turn to **6**. If you would rather walk past the cottage and continue south deeper into the woods, turn to **387**.

46

You are almost level with the boulder when the sand starts to liquefy under your feet. You sink into it and feel like you are being sucked under. You are soon up to your knees in wet sand, and the more you struggle to free yourself, the deeper you sink. The sand packs tightly around your legs and you cannot even lift one foot out. You soon tire and begin to panic at the thought of being trapped by quicksand at the mercy of the island's monsters. You decide the only thing you can do to save yourself is to call for help. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **246**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **316**.

47

The arrow whistles past your ear and bounces off the cobblestones behind you. The old man curses and hobbles off down the street to pick up the arrow. Not wishing to attract attention, you decide to run off before he calls for help. If you want to turn left to head north, turn to **241**. If you want to keep on walking east, turn to **290**. If you want to turn right and head south, turn to **263**.

48

Valmorka places the tips of her fingers on her forehead and starts wailing with her pointed tongue waggling in her mouth. The sound is unnerving, but you are not affected by it. You advance towards her knowing your best chance to defeat her would be to get close without being seen. If you have a Potion of Invisibility, turn to **242**. If you do not have this potion, turn to **343**.

49

You walk on along the riverbank with the river carving a deep furrow through the thick jungle terrain. You eventually come to a rope bridge that spans the river. If you want to walk across the bridge, turn to **368**. If you want to keep walking north along the west bank, turn to **97**.

50

The barman leans forward and says in a low voice, 'Now what would you be wanting a magic ring for?' If you want to reply that you need one to help you on a very dangerous mission, turn to **313**. If you want to reply that it's none of his business, turn to **99**.

51

The narrow alleyway is mostly in shadow and is full of rubbish. You do not see an iron bucket until it's too late, and trip over it as you run. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **189**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **331**.

When you get near to the archway, you are surprised to see that the guard isn't human.

52

When you get near to the archway, you are surprised to see that the guard isn't human. 'He's a DOGMAN,' Vargas says, reading your mind. 'Half man, half dog. Vicious beasts they are, too. Looks like the peculiar people of Shazâar have hired them in to keep us visitors out! But leave it to me, I can speak Dogman!' Vargas goes up to the guard to talk to him and straight away beckons you to follow him through the archway with the guard saluting you as you walk past him. 'I told him you were a cousin of Lord Tanneth. He wouldn't know of course!' You hurry through the narrow streets and alleyways to a small market where Vargas walks over to a stall selling weapons. He walks back to you a minute later shaking his head. 'No luck, I'm afraid. Nobody in Thieves Market has a Dragonblade for sale, sorry. The best I can do for you now is hire a camel to take you to the Wormholes. Hopefully you will be able to defeat the Spider Demon with your own sword.' True to his word, Vargas arranges the camel hire, and you are soon pacing through the barren desert and reach Dragon Valley without any trouble. Fearful of an ambush, you keep a sharp eye out riding through the valley until you finally arrive at the Wormholes on the south side of Uron Heights. You slide off your camel, draw your sword and enter the first cave you come to. Turn to **92**.

53

You walk on along the shoreline and catch sight of what looks like a ghostly apparition coming slowly towards you. When it gets close, you see that it is the ghost-like figure of a SKELETON in hooded robes sitting on a wooden cart, pulled by a skeletal horse with fiery, red eyes. There is a long wooden crate on the back of the cart. The Skeleton brings the horse to a halt and hisses the words 'Dead men don't lie' as it points its bony forefinger at you. A bright red flash is the last thing you see before a fireball slams into your chest with fatal results. Your adventure ends here.

54

You climb on to your horse and ride north at a steady gallop across the grassland and finally arrive at the main gates of Halak as the afternoon sun is beginning to sink on the western horizon. Yash guides his horse through the narrow streets of the city with you following behind. The streets are busy with people going about their business, or standing in groups laughing and gossiping. You turn into the back streets and arrive at a foundry where you see a man wearing a heavily stained apron hammering a long piece of iron on his anvil. You

dismount and Yash introduces you to the armourer, who wipes his sweaty forehead with a dirty cloth and shakes your hand. 'You must be Nicodemus's champion,' he says in a deep voice. 'He sent me payment and a note for me to give you a special sword. He requested a Dragonblade. Alas, I'm not skilled enough to craft one. The only swordsmith I know who could forge a Dragonblade is Kenzo Mamoosh. He's a very odd character. He used to live in Halak but vanished. Nobody knows where he lives now. But your trip here has not been wasted. What I can give you is my very best Shadow Sword, which people say is as powerful as a Dragonblade.' If you want to accept the gift of a Shadow Sword, turn to **109**. If you want to decline his offer, turn to **323**.

55

The Hawk Wasp buzzes around your head as you scramble down the tree but doesn't sting you. You set off immediately in the direction of the temple. Turn to **134**.

56

The man looks at you anxiously as you approach him and wraps both his arms tightly around the box. If you want to ask him what's in his box, turn to **297**. If you want to walk past him and go inside the inn to find the cloaked men, turn to **268**. If you want to walk east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

57

The Hill Giant hurls the rock straight at you, but you just manage to jump out of the way in time to avoid being hit. You stand your ground ready to defend yourself against the raging Hill Giant who bears down on you swinging his huge sword.

HILL GIANT *SKILL 10* *STAMINA 12*

If you win, turn to **181**.

58

Your heart beats fast as you leap into the void, accelerating as you fall, doing your best to keep upright with your arms tucked in tight by your side. You hit the water hard, sinking deep. You swim slowly over to the bank and drag yourself out aware of a dull pain in your arm. You have torn a ligament in your arm but luckily it is not your sword arm. Lose 1 STAMINA point. You open your backpack and are dismayed to find that all your *Provisions* have disintegrated in the foaming waters. Delete them from your *Adventure Sheet*. You hear a voice call out and look over to see a woman standing in one of the smaller pools. Turn to **108**.

59

You close the door behind you and hurry back down the path into the jungle to head east. Turn to **176**.

60

Your heart starts to pound when you see the bite marks on your arm and the blood flowing from the deep wound. You know that your fate is sealed. Before the night has ended, you will develop a fever. Your body will shapeshift into a Werewolf with your fingernails turning into claws and your jaw filled with long fangs. You will howl at the moon and run off in search of prey. Your adventure ends here.

61

You send the bucket clattering down the alleyway, but you just manage to stay on your feet. A wooden door opens on the left and you see the town crier appear, looking to find out who is making the noise. He sees you and asks you what you are doing. You reply that you jumped in the horse trough to escape from the Giant Hornets and would like to speak to him. He relaxes and invites you into his house, saying, 'Those infernal Hornets keep coming back here terrorizing everybody. Poor old Kevan the carpenter was stung to death last week. Horrible it was. Anyway, they are gone for now. I should introduce myself. My name is Sylas. Sit yourself down by the fire and dry yourself out. Perhaps a currant bun would cheer you up? My sister baked them. Delicious they are.' If you would like to eat a currant bun, turn to **120**. If you want to reply that you are not hungry, turn to **157**.

62

The fisherman whoops with delight and praises your bravery for venturing on to Blackrock Island. 'Would you think it fair if I asked for 3 Gold Pieces as my share of the spoils. If you do, I'll sail you to wherever you want to go to next,' he says jovially. If you want to give him 3 Gold Pieces and tell him to sail you back to the pebble beach on the mainland, turn to **122**. If you want to give him 3 Gold Pieces and tell him to sail you around the coast to the mouth of River Trask, turn to **308**. If you want to tell him he is being greedy and deserves nothing, turn to **5**.

63

You place the numbered cubes into the recesses in the box lid and watch them sink down. You hear a click and suddenly the wooden box springs open and inside you find 5 Gold Pieces. Gain 1 LUCK point. The door is also triggered to unbolt itself, and you exit the room into warm sunlight. Barton looks surprised to see you, and after whispering to him how easy his puzzle was, you make your way out of the market in good spirits. Turn to **325**.

64

The chest is too heavy and bulky to carry, and you decide to cover it up with sand and hopefully return one day to try opening it again. Turn to **345**.

65

You peer into the cave entrance and are about to walk in when you hear strange noises outside. You spin round and see a mass of Plague Spiders pouring out of the next cave. They form a semi-circle around you and stop as though waiting for a command. You are trapped. If you want to run into the cave, turn to **152**. If you are wearing a Ring of Fire but have not used it yet, turn to **258**. If you want to attack the Plague Spiders with your sword, turn to **312**.

66

As you are about to step on to the gangplank, Nicodemus points his finger at you and says in a serious voice, 'Remember, as soon as they hatch, Valmorka's zombie offspring will rampage across Allansia. It is crucial that you destroy them before they leave their lair. But you must be prepared, or risk failure or even death, and

that is why you must start your quest in Kaynlesh-Ma. The merchants there will have items you need. A Ring of Fire could wipe out a swarm of Plague Spiders and Arrika Root can make you immune to infection from their bite. Valmorka's mental powers control people as well as her Plague Spiders, but there are artefacts to be found that can shield you. A Dragonblade is the best weapon to use to slay a Spider Demon. Alas, I do not own a Dragonblade, but I can give you this!' Nicodemus hands you a sword that looks similar to the one taken from you by the city guards. 'Now, you must be on your way,' he says with a reassuring smile. 'Remember, you do not have much time. Do not get sidetracked!' You promise Nicodemus not to let him down and board the ship. Turn to **117**.

67

You follow the coastline east until you reach the south-east tip of the mainland, where you have no choice but to head north. Turn to **236**.

68

When he sees you reach for your sword, the hermit steps back and blows hard on his horn. You hear a loud, piercing note that reverberates through the woods. There is a sudden puff of smoke through which steps a fearsome-looking creature, half-man and half-bull, with a huge pair of curved horns. It's a MINOTAUR. The hermit slams his door shut and appears at the window smiling as his guardian charges head down at you, snorting loudly.

MINOTAUR *SKILL 10* *STAMINA 9*

If you win, turn to **319**. You may *Escape* after three *Attack Rounds* by running off deeper into the woods. Lose 2 STAMINA points and turn to **387**.

69

You find the perfect place to hide under an overhanging rock. You wait for a few minutes, and your suspicions are confirmed when you see four hooded figures appear in long sand-coloured robes. They are OUTLAWS, and each of them is armed with a bow and a quiver of arrows. They keep looking all around and start arguing between themselves, obviously annoyed that they have lost track of you. You watch the Outlaws change direction and head east, and when they are out of sight, you continue your long trek south. The Snakelands eventually turns into

scrubland, which covers the wide peninsula extending out into the Gulf of Shamuz. Before they were driven out by the Snake People, early settlers came to the peninsula to live by the lake there and gave it the name Lake of Sorrows. Fish Men now occupy the settler village and usually take refuge in the lake when the Raiders come. You arrive in the village and see a group of FISH MEN standing together, their green scales glistening in the sunlight. When they see you, they slip into the lake and disappear. If you want to call out and tell them that you need to speak to them, turn to **173**. If you want to search the Fish Men's huts, turn to **324**.

70

You rush to the back of the library and open the door into a narrow alleyway that leads back to the street. You kick over a tin mug that was hidden by leaves, and see something sparkle as it flies out and lands on the ground. It's a small diamond ring. Gain 1 LUCK point. Back on the street you have to decide quickly whether to go back and either turn left at the crossroads to head east (turn to **290**) or go straight on at the crossroads to head south (turn to **263**).

71

You flick the ants off your hand and reach further down into the hollow where you feel several small objects lying at the bottom that were dropped in there long ago by a scavenger bird. You pull out a glass marble, a bronze key with the number 44 stamped on it, a large silver ring in the shape of a lion's head, a Gold Piece, and a small number 9 made of brass. You put the key and the brass number in your pocket (make a note on your *Adventure Sheet*) and decide what to do with the ring. If you want to put it on your finger, turn to **337**. If you would rather leave the ring behind, turn to **144**.

72

You leap away from the mound, brushing the Fire Ants off you as fast as possible as they continue to sting you. The Fire Ants of Arantis are poisonous, and small blisters appear on your neck, arms and legs that quickly become infected. Lose 4 STAMINA points. Trying to ignore the fiery pain from the stings, you continue your trek through the jungle, and it's not long before you arrive at the edge of a deep ravine where you are forced to head south-east along the ridge. Turn to **288**.

73

The Goblin looks very happy to hand over his sword. You give him 10 Gold Pieces and your own sword in exchange. But at least his claim was true. The Doom Sword is a fearful weapon. Add 1 to your *Attack Strength* while you wield this sword in battle. Pleased with your purchase, you bid Grizzle farewell and head east into the jungle. Turn to **254**.

74

You sit down at the table and tell the Goblins that you don't have time to play dice unless it's for something you need. 'And what might that something be?' asks the Goblin opposite you in a wheezy voice. You ask if they know where to buy magic rings. 'Of course I does,' he replies. 'Let's play Doubles for it. Whoever rolls a double first, wins. If I wins, you gives me a Gold Piece. If I loses, I tells yer where to get a magic ring. C'mon, let's roll some bones!' If you want to play their dice game, turn to **364**. If you would rather leave them and talk to the barman, turn to **235**.

You dash across the courtyard and see somebody appear in the archway.

75

You dash across the courtyard and see somebody appear in the archway. It's another man dressed in crimson robes wearing an even bigger feathered headdress. He sees you, raises his arms in the air and starts chanting in a language you do not understand. Smoke swirls around his feet and envelopes you and makes you feel drowsy. You slump down on the nearest bench, still conscious but barely able to move a muscle. The man in the headdress calls out and two bald men in crimson robes come running. 'Lock the intruder up. The sacrifice will take place at dawn!' The men pick you up and carry you through the archway and along a corridor to a stone stairwell on the right that leads down to a dark dungeon corridor where they put you down on the floor of a dingy cell. Your backpack and weapons are taken from you and placed in a cupboard in the corridor. Unable to move, you lie there frustrated and angry, and eventually fall into a deep sleep. If you drank Mallow Bark tea, turn to **138**. If you did not drink this tea, turn to **249**.

76

You slip the ring off the bony finger and slide it on to your middle finger. The ring once belonged to a Plague Demon and will gradually drain the life energy of anybody who wears it. If you are wearing a Silver Serpent charm around your neck, turn to **250**. If you are not wearing this charm, turn to **383**.

77

It doesn't take long to sail back to the mainland, where you help the fisherman drag his boat on to the beach. You bid him farewell and carry on walking east and eventually reach the east coast of Arantis. Seeing nothing of interest, you head north along the shoreline. Turn to **236**.

78

The Guards are well trained in spear throwing, but fortunately all five spears miss you and fly past your head. Gain 1 LUCK point. You do not look back and keep on running as fast as you can. If you want to head north, turn to **241**. If you want to head east, turn to **290**. If you want to head south, turn to **263**.

79

You think hard what to do, and decide to leave the cavern and come back with help. You defeated the Spider Demon but until the cavern is sealed and all the Spider eggs are destroyed, Allansia remains under threat. But when you return, you find that all the eggs have hatched and the Plague Spiders have swarmed. The rampage has begun. Your adventure ends here.

80

You are unaffected by the poison dart and throw it on the ground. You look all around to see who might have fired their blowpipe at you but don't see anybody. You hear the rustle of leaves behind you and spin round and catch a fleeting glimpse of a small, heavily tattooed, bare-chested man as he runs off into the thick undergrowth. You decide not to follow him for fear of being hit by another dart. Keeping a sharp eye out for anything that moves, you press on east. Turn to **226**.

81

You pay the Medicine Man who hands you a bulbous Arrika Root, pink and white in colour, and tells you to bite off small pieces of it and chew them slowly. The root is fibrous and tastes bitter, but he encourages you to carry on chewing it. He thanks you for your custom and you set off again, walking north along the west bank of the river. Turn to **49**.

82

Captain Shanklin curses and strides towards you with his cutlass drawn. If you want to fight him barehanded, turn to **168**. If you want to run down the gangplank, turn to **275**.

83

You climb up the rough stone steps to the large wooden door, which has an iron ring handle. There is a long rope cord that hangs down from the bell and a brass sign above a slot in the door that says, 'Do not touch the door handle. Pay 1 Gold Piece and ring the bell.' If you want to drop a Gold Piece through the slot and pull on the bell ringer, turn to **165**. If you want to try to open the door, turn to **247**. If you would rather walk back down the steps and head east, turn to **190**.

84

You remain unconscious for quite some time but fortunately no hungry creatures or robbers come by. You pick yourself up, dust yourself down and set off towards the Wormholes. Turn to **293**.

85

You apologize profusely and tell the old man that you are on a dangerous mission to save Allansia and that you weren't thinking clearly. You offer him 2 Gold Pieces in compensation, which he takes from you and drops in the pool. He stares at you intensely, unsure if you are telling the truth, before telling the captain that he isn't going to press charges. The captain grabs you by the collar and says sternly, 'I'll let you go this time on the basis that it's true what you say about the coming of the Plague Spiders. But do not cross my path again.' You thank them both and hurry off before they change their minds. If you want to turn left to head north, turn to **241**. If you want to keep on walking east, turn to **290**. If you want to turn right and head south, turn to **263**.

86

You hurry back to the beach and are relieved to see the fisherman is still there, lying fast asleep in his boat. You wade into the sea and tell him to pull up his anchor and set sail. He sits up and looks alarmed when he sees you. 'You're bleeding. What happened?' he asks anxiously as you climb into the boat. You tell him about the encounter with the dead Pirate and the battle with the Hill Giant. He congratulates you and asks if you found any treasure. If you want to reply that you found some Gold Pieces, turn to **62**. If you want to tell him that you didn't find any treasure, turn to **218**.

87

The liquid has a fiery taste and makes you feel suddenly energized. You have drunk a Potion of Health. Gain 4 STAMINA points. Pleased with your find, you put the empty flask in your backpack and carry on walking. Turn to **163**.

88

The Barbarian looks at you and says, 'That's probably a good thing. Fang is a town run by a rogue Baron called Sukumvit who built a monster-filled dungeon there to attract visitors and offered a purse of 10,000 Gold Pieces to the first person who came out alive. That wasn't my brother. He went in and never came out. I wish I knew how it ended for him. I know he would have died a hero.' You sympathize and tell him that your mission today is likely to be more dangerous than venturing into a prize dungeon but stop short of telling him why. With a cave entrance now just a short distance away, he stops and says, 'Enough reminiscing. This is as far as I go. Goodbye.' He walks off in the direction of Dragon Valley leaving you to enter the cave. Turn to **92**.

89

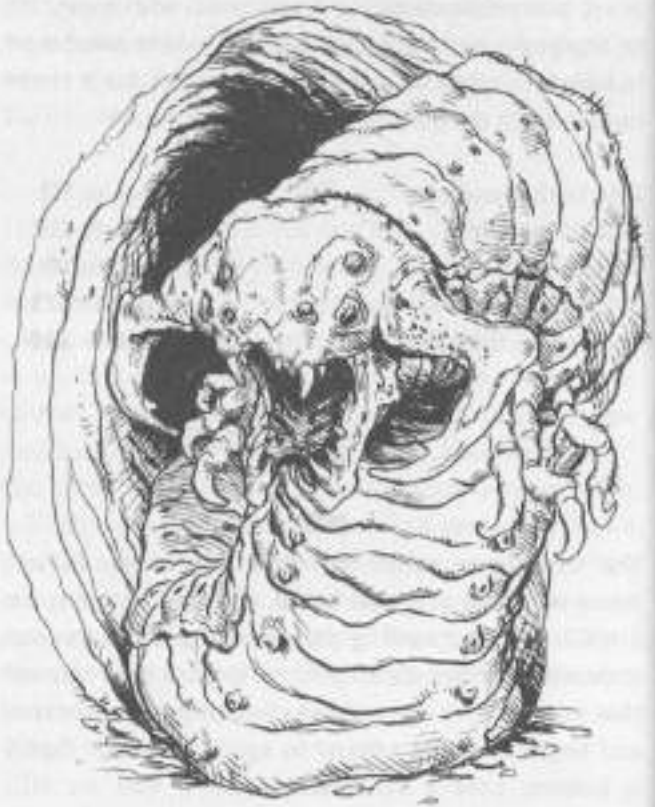
There are several people in the street, which is lined with tall, stone buildings with sturdy oak doors and barred windows. You see a scraggy-haired hawker walking towards you, pushing a cart piled high with broken

weapons and bits of rusty armour, a young boy in ragged clothes who is teaching his dog to jump through an iron hoop, two women wearing head shawls who appear to be arguing over a bucket of fish, and two bearded men in long blue robes who are standing near a large stone horse trough deep in conversation. Will you:

Talk to the hawker?	Turn to **112**
Talk to the boy?	Turn to **257**
Talk to the women?	Turn to **10**
Talk to the bearded men?	Turn to **373**
Walk on up the street?	Turn to **228**

90

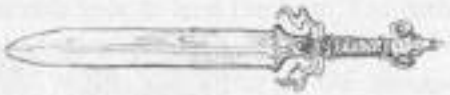
Not wishing to suffer the same fate as the Pirate, you gulp down the blue liquid. Nothing happens for a while until a gnawing pain starts to build in your stomach. It grows steadily worse until it is so intense that you drop to the ground clutching your stomach and begin writhing around in agony. The blue liquid is poison. Lose 4 STAMINA points. If you are still alive, you gradually recover and stand up, cursing the dead Pirate. If you want to keep going inland, turn to **210**. If you want to return to the fisherman's boat, turn to **350**.



A giant maggot-like creature with a gaping mouth and powerful mandibles bursts through the tunnel wall.

91

The long walk is tiring and saps your energy. Lose 1 STAMINA point. With the trees on the edge of the jungle looming large, you press on knowing the urgency of the mission. Some distance away to your left, you catch sight of a tall stone pinnacle on the edge of the jungle. If you want to make a detour to look at the pinnacle, turn to **231**. If you would rather head straight into the Whispering Jungle, turn to **186**.



92

You hear a grinding sound coming from down the tunnel and the thought of coming face-to-face with Plague Spiders fills you with fear. But it is not a deadly arachnid that you encounter. A giant maggot-like creature with a gaping mouth and powerful mandibles bursts through the tunnel wall up ahead and slithers towards you. It is virtually blind but aware of your presence through sensing your body heat. It is a ROCK GRUB and you must fight it.

ROCK GRUB *SKILL 7* *STAMINA 10*

If you win, turn to **352**.

93

You make a fire and cook some mushrooms, which taste delicious (add 1 STAMINA point), before bedding down with your head resting on your backpack. You look up at the moonlit sky wondering what the next day might bring and whether you would find what you need in time to defeat the Spider Demon. You finally drift off to sleep with the flames still dancing on the burning logs. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **20**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **126**.

94

Sylas grins and says, 'Not a lot, I'm afraid. All I can tell you is that Arrika is a river plant. You should talk to the local river boatmen. They should know where to find it.' You thank Sylas for his help and leave him to walk back up the alleyway and turn left. Turn to **393**.

95

Your aim is true and the spear finds its mark, striking the Bandit in the stomach. He grimaces in pain and falls over backwards into the sea, clutching the spear. Seeing their comrade slain, the two crew start yelling at each other and paddle frantically back towards the shore. There is no sign of Pinn in the water, and you fear he has been eaten by a sea creature. You take hold of the rudder and steer a north-westerly course towards land. You sail along the rocky coast until you find a suitable spot to land the boat. You gather your belongings and walk north along the coast towards the estuary. When you arrive at the mouth of the river, you see a raft tied to a pontoon, and next to it, a bamboo hut with a roof made of long, broad leaves. There are two woven baskets outside the open front door. If you want to call out to see if there is anybody in the hut, turn to **166**. If you want to walk past the hut, turn to **49**.

96

The Guard smiles slyly at you and tells you to put it in his pocket without anybody seeing. He takes a step back and says loudly, 'That all seems to be in order. You are free to go. Sorry for troubling you. We hope you enjoy your stay in Kaynlesh-Ma.' You walk on, silently cursing him as he rejoins the other Guards. Turn to **263**.

97

The jungle becomes noticeably thicker with the dense foliage forcing you to walk along the very edge of the riverbank. Progress is slow and you have to use your sword to cut through. You notice that the jungle is lighter on the other side of the river. If you want to press on, turn to **327**. If you want to walk back to the rope bridge and cross the river, turn to **368**.

98

The Plague Spiders run blindly at you with their repulsive fungal tubes bulging. You draw your sword just as the first Plague Spider bears down on you ready to strike with its fangs. You must fight it!

PLAGUE SPIDER *SKILL 10* *STAMINA 8*

If you win without losing any *Attack Rounds*, turn to **145**. If you win but lost one or more *Attack Rounds*, turn to **365**.

99

The barman rolls his eyes and says, 'Never mind. It's your loss.' He turns away to serve another customer and ignores you when you try to get his attention again. You glance around the packed room and decide it's time to leave the inn and walk east up the cobbled street. Turn to **89**.

100

You dive into the water, swimming as fast as you can away from the long tentacles of the Giant Octopus. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **147**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **322**.

101

You are exhausted from your battle with the Giant Snake and take a few moments to rest. You are about to set off again when you notice a skeletal hand in the bushes nearby, perhaps a hand that once belonged to some unfortunate victim who fell foul of the Giant Snake. There is a gold signet ring on the middle of the finger that is etched with a snake skull. If you want to put the ring on your own finger, turn to **76**. If you would rather leave the ring and continue your trek, turn to **133**.

102

The brooch pin bends in the keyhole and snaps off. You curse and empty your pockets, but cannot find anything else to use to pick the lock. Time passes and your frustration grows. It starts to get dark, and feeling exhausted after a long day spent walking, you lie down on the floor to get some rest and fall asleep. Turn **249**.

103

You drop a Gold Piece into the Guard's pocket without anybody seeing. He takes a step back and says loudly, 'That all seems to be in order. You are free to go. Sorry for troubling you. We hope you enjoy your stay in Kaynlesh-Ma.' You walk on, silently cursing him as he rejoins the other Guards. Turn to **263**.

104

Larch carries the rug outside and rolls it out on the ground, saying, 'Right then, step on the rug and I'll say the magic words, and you can be on your way. The keep is quite a long way from here along the south coast, but you should get there before nightfall.' If you want to step on the rug, turn to **239**. If you want to change your mind about the rug, turn to **399**.

105

The Barbarian stops in his tracks and turns to face you. 'What? Then you must know what happened to him! He was a hero. Tell me, how did he die?' If you want to say that you were forced to fight him to the death, turn to **132**. If you want to say that you don't know how he died, turn to **17**.

106

Peggy Wellow apologizes for tricking you into coming on board but says she had no choice. The captain warned her that any disobedience would be severely punished. You tell her to leave the ship while she still can. A search of the captain's pockets yields a brass telescope, 2 Gold Pieces and a brass-monkey charm. Pleased with your findings, you are about to take the Captain's cutlass but a gesture from Nicodemus tells you there is no need, so you walk down the gangplank to where the wizard is waiting. Turn to **275**.

107

You slip the wristband on to your wrist wondering where it came from. Feeling no ill effects from wearing it, you set off once again. But the wristband is cursed and will bring you bad luck. Lose 2 LUCK points. Turn to **303**.

The long-haired woman is wearing a half-suit of armour and is standing almost waist-deep in the pool.

108

The long-haired woman is wearing a half-suit of armour and is standing almost waist-deep in the pool. She smiles at you and says, 'Doth the gods smile on me this day? What fate brought you here to these most beautiful Sun Pools? My name is Roze, daughter of Garius of Halak. I have the misfortune to find myself trapped here with my foot wedged in the rocks. Would you but help a fellow adventurer? I would be forever grateful were you to help free me.' If you want to throw a vine to the woman to pull her out of the pool, turn to **27**. If you would rather ignore her plea and head east, turn to **292**.

109

The Shadow Sword is made of the finest steel and looks to be razor-sharp. You thank the armourer for his gift and give him your old sword in return, happy to be rid of it. Add 1 to your *Attack Strength* while you wield this sword in battle. Turn to **323**.

110

When he sees you coming towards him, the fisherman stands up and grabs a spear from inside his boat. 'That's far enough. Stop right there,' he shouts in a stern voice. His face is lined and suntanned, and he has curly brown hair, bushy eyebrows and a thick beard. He grips his spear tightly and stares at you fiercely, waiting for you to say something. He relaxes when he sees you raise your hands to show that you are not holding your sword. 'You can't be too careful in these parts,' he says putting down his spear. If you want to ask him about the island, turn to **243**. If you want to ask him if he would sail you around the coast to the mouth of the River Trask, turn to **178**.

111

You gulp down the contents of the bottle and soon realize you have made a fatal mistake. You have drunk a bottle of deadly poison! You sink to your knees clutching your stomach and fall unconscious, never to recover. Your adventure ends here.

112

The hawker glowers at you as you approach him and says sharply, 'Get out of my way, I'm in a hurry. I've got to get this pile of old iron on board the *Sea Turtle* before she sets sail.' If you want to ask if you could buy a helmet from him, turn to **127**. If you would rather talk to somebody else, turn to **395**. If you want to walk up the street, turn to **228**.

113

Just as the fireball is about to engulf you, it stops and veers away as though bouncing off an invisible shield. The Dragon spits out another fireball, and the same thing happens again. Frustrated by events, the Dragon decides to save its energy and flies off in search of new prey. Vargas can't believe his eyes. 'How did you do that?' he asks imploringly. You shrug and point at your brooch, which makes him burst out laughing. 'Incredible! Let's get you to Shazâar!' You are soon flying over the vast expanse of the Desert of Skulls with Vargas doing everything he can to fly faster. At last, the desert city comes into view, and you begin your descent, landing on the west side of the city walls. You climb out of the basket and walk over with Vargas to a stone archway where an armed guard is standing. Turn to **52**.

114

You make good progress across the grassland deep in thought about the challenges ahead when you become aware of the sound of galloping hooves. A small dust cloud appears on the northern horizon, and the sound of the hooves grows louder. Whoever the riders are, they are coming in your direction. If you want to lie down and hide behind a bush, turn to **202**. If you want to stand and face whoever is fast approaching, turn to **389**.

115

You slip on a loose stone and fall backwards into the river, and cannot stop yourself from being swept over the edge of the waterfall. Your heart pounds in your chest as you fall, tumbling head-over-heels into the deep pool below. You hit the water hard, hitting your head on a rock, and black out. You come to moments later with blood pouring from a gash on your forehead. You feel a sharp pain in your leg and realize with horror that you are being eaten alive by SNAPPERFISH. You are too weak to defend yourself, and with their powerful bite, it does not take them long to strip all the flesh from your bones. Your adventure ends here.

116

The Goblin spins round and looks startled when he sees you. He raises his warhammer in the air, ready to defend himself. You assure him that you mean him no harm and that you are on an important mission and need a Dragonblade. 'You don't need no Dragonblade if yer's got one of these!' he says sneering, waving his warhammer around his head. You ask him what he is doing at the mine. 'What's it to you, eh?' If you want to offer him one of your *Provisions* to hear his story, turn to **240**. If you want to attack the Goblin, turn to **355**. If you want to leave him and continue your quest, turn to **254**.

117

With calm seas and a steady wind, the voyage to Kaynlesh-Ma is smooth and without incident. The soothing sound of the waves lapping against the hull, the wind in the sails and the ropes creaking in the wooden blocks take your mind off the dangerous quest ahead. During the voyage, the captain invites you to dine with him, saying jauntily, 'The old wizard paid for your grub but don't get too excited about it!' You are given a plate of foul-smelling salted beef stew and some hard-baked biscuits that are infested with weevils. The captain tucks into the slop on his plate and not wishing to offend him, you do similarly. With an uncomfortable feeling in your stomach, you listen to him talk about his life at sea and finally get the chance to ask him about Kaynlesh-Ma. He replies in a gruff voice, saying, 'I don't know much other than it used to be a city of scholars but in recent times there's been an influx of merchants and traders along with swindlers and pickpockets, all of them after your purse! People go there to buy fancy things like books, maps, jewellery and magic items. I'm sure you'll find what you are looking for.' You retire to your cabin early but are soon up again being ill over the side of the boat. Lose 2 STAMINA points. The *Barracuda* sails on through the night, passing the notorious Blood Island at dawn and finally docks late morning in Kaynlesh-Ma at the mouth of the River Eltus. When you gather up your belongings, you notice that the guard on your sword

is loose and the blade isn't very sharp, and you curse the loss of the sword you had. It's already warm when you disembark the *Barracuda* and walk along the quay towards the city's imposing buildings. Ahead, you see four men in bright tunics and cotton breeches huddled together chatting outside the Crooked Hand, a small inn at the end of a cobbled street that leads into the city. One of the men mumbles something and they all turn to stare at you. Will you:

Walk over to talk to the men?	Turn to **385**
Ignore the men and enter the inn?	Turn to **184**
Walk past the men and up the cobbled street?	Turn to **89**

118

The woman sighs and says, 'And who might that friend be?' If you want to reply that the friend is called Peggy, turn to **300**. If you want to reply that the friend is called Larch, turn to **227**. If you want to reply that the friend is called Sylas, turn to **363**.

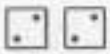
119

The Fish Man walks over to a small pile of rocks behind one of the bamboo huts. He moves them to one side to reveal a wood panel, which he lifts up to reveal a hidden cavity. He reaches in and pulls out a magnificent-looking sword with a dragon skull pommel, elaborate guard and iridescent steel blade. There is no doubting it's a Dragonblade. He hands it to you and says, 'Nothing can withstand a blow from a Dragonblade. Use it well and save us all!' You thank the Fish Man and tell him time is short and you must reach the Wormholes before nightfall. 'Wait there!' he says and walks off. He soon returns with a pair of winged boots. 'Try these on for size,' he says enthusiastically. 'They belonged to an old Wizard. He was swimming in the lake and got into trouble. I saved him and he gave them to me. He thought I might like to try flying instead of swimming for a change. Really? How was I supposed to get my webbed feet in them? You take them. Just point in the direction you want to go. They should get you at least halfway to the Wormholes before they run out of power.' You sit down to put on the boots, and when you stand up, you feel yourself lift off the ground slightly. You raise your arm in the air and point to the north. You rise five metres into the air and shoot off and look back to see the Fish Man waving his trident above his head. You fly quickly over the barren land, and it doesn't take long

to reach the north edge of the Snakelands with the Wormholes clearly in view. You suddenly feel yourself drop and realize the boots are running out of power. You descend at speed and brace yourself for a crash landing, ready to hit the ground running. The ground seems to rise up, and you land hard. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **237**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **28**.

120

Sylas opens a cupboard on the far wall and takes out a wooden bowl piled high with currant buns, baked golden brown, and offers one to you. If you want to eat one now, gain 2 STAMINA points. If you would rather put one in your backpack and eat it later, you will gain 2 STAMINA points when you do. You watch Sylas put the wooden bowl back in the cupboard and thank him for his generosity. Turn to **157**.



121

The man puts down his bow and lifts the lids off the baskets. 'I'm a Medicine Man and I gather foods that are good for your health. In here I have Mallow Bark, which revives and heals you if you make it into a hot drink. The other basket contains a few pieces of precious Arrika Root from the river. Chewing it prevents toxic infections. If you wish to enjoy their benefit, a cup of Mallow Bark tea and a piece of Arrika Root each cost 1 Gold Piece.' If you want to buy Arrika Root, turn to **81**. If you want to buy Arrika Root and Mallow Bark, turn to **32**. If you don't want to buy anything, you say goodbye and set off again, walking north along the west bank of the river (turn to **49**).

122

The fisherman pulls up the anchor and sets sail. It doesn't take long to sail back to the mainland, where you help him drag his boat on to the beach. After shaking hands to say goodbye, the fisherman asks if you need any more information. You ask him if he knows where to find Arrika Root. He slaps his hand on his thigh and says, 'I do! Talk to the Medicine Man who lives near the mouth of the River Trask. You'll recognize his hut by the two large woven baskets outside the front door.' You thank him for his help and bid him farewell. You head east and eventually reach the east coast of Arantis. Seeing nothing of interest, you decide to head north along the shoreline. Turn to **236**.

123

You gently rub the ruby and utter the words 'One, two, three, fire', but nothing happens. You say it again, but still nothing happens. You look closely at the ring and see that some of the gold has rubbed off. The ring is a fake. It's a gold-plated copper ring and the stone is red glass. The Plague Spiders close in on you, and you get ready to defend yourself. Turn to **167**.

124

The boat looks to have been out of the water for a long time. The wooden hull is in need of repair as is the rudder, which has a split at the top. The cotton sail is torn, and all the ropes are sun-bleached and frayed. You find an old knife and a tangled fishing net under the bench seat. You tuck the knife into your belt and decide what to do. If you want to try sailing the boat, turn to **342**. If you want to walk north towards the estuary, turn to **192**.

You are suddenly confronted by a skeletal figure in ragged robes wielding a scythe.

125

As you approach the crumbling ruins of what was once a southern fortress, you see a wind-eroded sign carved in the sandstone that says Rabuskar. The roofs are long gone and not many of the rooms remain intact with the wind howling through the gaps of missing windows. You clamber over a pile of stones from a broken wall into the main building and are suddenly confronted by a skeletal figure in ragged robes wielding a scythe. Its grey flesh is hanging off its bones, and it makes hideous gurgling noises as it closes in on you. The undead creature is a LICH and you must fight it. Add 1 to your *Attack Strength* during each *Attack Round* if you possess a silver dagger.

LICH	*SKILL 9*	*STAMINA 8*

If you win, turn to **346**.

126

You are woken in the middle of the night by a howling. The fire is nothing more than the red glow of dying embers, but there's a full moon and you are able to see across the plain in the pale light. You hear low growling and sense movement nearby, and stand up to draw your sword. A hairy creature, humanoid in shape, suddenly emerges from the shadows, walking upright on its powerful hind legs. The beast is a savage WEREWOLF, which leaps forward to slash and bite you with its long claws and sharp fangs.

WEREWOLF *SKILL 8* *STAMINA 9*

If you win without losing an *Attack Round*, turn to **396**. If you lost one or more *Attack Rounds*, turn to **267**.

127

The hawker doesn't stop but holds up a winged helmet as he passes by and says, 'This is only one I have. You can buy it for 1 Gold Piece. Do you want it?' If you want to buy the helmet, turn to **149**. If you would rather talk to somebody else, turn to **395**. If you want to walk up the street, turn to **228**.

128

You remain unconscious for quite some time and when you come to, you feel disorientated and have excruciating pain in your wrists and ankles. You suddenly realize that you are hanging upside down, tied to a wooden pole that is being carried on the shoulders of two sweaty ORCS who smell like the sewers of Port Blacksand. You try to wriggle free but the ropes holding you are bound tight. All your possessions have been taken by an Orc raiding party and all you can do is listen to them discuss which tree they are going to tie you to and leave you to face the roaming monsters. There is nothing you can do to save yourself. Your adventure ends here.

129

You grab your dagger with your free hand and begin stabbing at the Giant Snake's body. It recoils quickly, allowing you to stand up and attack the wounded Snake with your sword.

GIANT SNAKE *SKILL 7* *STAMINA 2*

If you win, turn to **101**.

130

You leap towards the Giant Snake and strike it with your sword, cleaving its head with one blow. The Dwarf is struggling to breathe and you act fast to unwrap the snake's huge coils, which are squeezing the life out of him. You manage it just in time and help him to his feet. His face is flushed, and he holds on to you, panting rapidly. 'Thank you my friend... You saved my life... My name is Gillibran... How can I ever repay you?' he says, gasping for air. You decide to tell him about your mission and how you are running out of time to find a Dragonblade. He looks shocked by what he hears and says, 'That is terrible news. Sadly, I do not own a Dragonblade to give you. I came to the Whispering Jungle in search of a legendary warhammer I was told was here to replace the Hammer of Stonebridge, which was stolen from us by Goblins and lost in Darkwood Forest. But now I must return empty-handed to Stonebridge and warn my people about the Spider Demon. I am their King and we must be ready to defend ourselves against an invasion. Should you by chance find the warhammer I seek, I would gladly give you 100 Gold Pieces to bring it to me in Stonebridge once your mission is completed. There is no mistaking it. The

head will be enveloped by swirling opalescent orange light, and there should be a brass number on the handle. If the number is in place, you can use the warhammer to cause a rockfall by striking the ground with it, such is its power. I hope you find it for both our sakes. Now I must leave for Kaynlesh-Ma from where I'll take a boat north. Goodbye.' You watch Gillibran walk away and turn to head south. Turn to **232**.

131

'What do you want?' the older man asks you curtly. 'Can't you see we are busy?' If you want to ask them if they know anybody who sells magic rings, turn to **14**. If you would rather apologize for bothering them and walk on up the street, turn to **228**.

132

You try to explain that you had no choice, but Thawne won't listen. He flies into a blinding rage and launches a frenzied attack on you.

BARBARIAN *SKILL 9* *STAMINA 10*

If you win, turn to **285**.

133

It's not long before you arrive at the edge of a deep ravine, where you have no choice but to head south-east along the ridge. Turn to **288**.

134

Excited by what you might find in the temple, you hack your way through the undergrowth as fast as you can but it is tiring work in the humid heat. Lose 1 STAMINA point. You push on and after a while begin to wonder if you are heading in the right direction. If you possess a brass compass, turn to **26**. If you do not possess a brass compass, turn to **264**.

135

You walk on following the river hoping to reach the Sun Pools before dark, but with the light quickly fading, you decide to find somewhere to shelter before nightfall. You arrive at a stone cottage that has no roof or door and only two windows, both of which are broken. As you approach the doorway, a chicken runs out, flapping its wings and clucking loudly. You walk inside the cottage, which looks long abandoned. There are two broken chairs and a wooden chest with its drawers lying empty on the floor. You decide to stay in the cottage for the night and push the chest over to block the doorway. There is a pile of hay in one corner that looks good enough to sleep on, and when you go to lie down on it, you find

two chicken eggs. Gain 1 LUCK point. After cooking the eggs, you settle down for a good night's rest. You wake soon after dawn feeling refreshed and ready for the day. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You continue walking along the riverbank with the high tree line ahead becoming ominously closer. It's not long before you enter the jungle, following the twisting river through the dense undergrowth. The air is warm and humid, and you have to watch your step as you navigate the tangled roots and the thorny plants. You hear the shrill call of birds high up in the trees and the chatter of unseen animals, but press on resolutely. You walk on and become aware of the sound of rushing water and it's not long before you arrive at a waterfall where a raging torrent of water falls from high above into the river pool below. You hear a voice call out and look over to see a woman standing in one of three smaller pools nearby. Turn to **108**.

136

You wrap your arms around the bottom of the mast with the boat now almost on its side. Two more long tentacles break the surface and wrap themselves around the mast and begin dragging the boat under the water. You have no choice but to swim away as fast as you can and narrowly miss being snared by another tentacle. Gain 1 LUCK point. You don't stop to look back and swim on towards the western shoreline thinking about poor Pinn. Turn to **204**.

137

The man looks down and says, 'I'm not surprised you ask about it. It's a Minotaur's horn and my most treasured possession! Anybody who attacks me would regret it instantly because one blast of the horn and a Minotaur would be fighting by my side! It's not for sale but if you are interested in magic items, I've got some wonderful artefacts. I'm not usually partial to visitors but come in if you'd like to see what I've got.' If you want to go inside the hermit's cottage, turn to **273**. If you would rather bid the hermit farewell and continue south, turn to **387**.

138

You dream about Demons and Plague Spiders but are not asleep for long. You wake with a start and sit up feeling alert and very relieved to able to move again. You rattle the cell door, but it is firmly locked. If you have a bronze key, turn to the number that is stamped on it. If you do not have a bronze key, turn to **295**.

139

You snatch the coin from the Goblin and see that both sides are heads. You tell his brother to hand over his dice, which he does reluctantly. You roll them several times, and each time you roll a double six. If you want to accuse them of cheating and demand they tell you where to get magic rings, turn to **19**. If you want to demand they give you a Gold Piece for cheating, turn to **286**.

140

Valmorka places the tips of her fingers on her forehead and starts wailing with her pointed tongue waggling in her mouth. You suddenly develop a terrible pain in your head and cannot stop yourself from dropping your weapon. You step slowly towards the Demon with your arms by your side as if being pulled along by an invisible force. You are unable to block Valmorka's power of mind control as you are drawn towards her. She looms over you before bending down to sink her long fangs in your neck. Your adventure ends here.

141

It's a difficult descent, but you manage to scramble down the face of the waterfall behind the raging torrent of water to the large pool at the bottom where there are three other smaller pools close by. You hear a voice call out and look over to see a woman standing in one of the smaller pools. Turn to **108**.

There are two Goblins rolling dice at a table just in front of you.

142

The fisherman steers his boat towards the beach and throws a rope to you that you manage to catch and tie around your waist. He pulls it as hard as he can and drags you out of the quicksand. You hear a loud roar coming from the bushes and run into the sea just as a huge SABRE-TOOTHED TIGER bounds on to the beach. The fisherman helps you climb back in the boat and sets sail, saying, 'I presume you've seen enough of Blackrock Island?' If you want to tell him to sail you round to the east side of the island, turn to **193**. If you want to ask him to sail you back to the mainland, turn to **77**. If you want to ask him to sail you back to the mainland and around to the mouth of the River Trask, turn to **176**.

143

You open the heavy door and enter a crowded room that has a wooden bar running the length of the far wall and round tables crammed with noisy fisherman bragging about their catches. The beefy man in the white apron who you saw outside is standing behind the bar busily serving drinks to impatient customers. There are two Goblins rolling dice at a table just in front of you. 'Hey, you! Do yer wanna play a game with us?' one of the Goblins asks with a sneer. If you want to sit down to play dice with the Goblins, turn to **74**. If you would rather walk over to speak to the barman, turn to **235**.

144

You toss the ring back into the hollow and press on south. Turn to **229**.

145

You hardly have time to think before the other two Plague Spiders bear down on you. Fight them one at a time.

	SKILL	*STAMINA*
First PLAGUE SPIDER	*9*	*8*
Second PLAGUE SPIDER	*10*	*7*

If you win without losing any *Attack Rounds*, turn to **392**. If you win but lost one or more *Attack Rounds*, turn to **160**.

146

You spin the coin in the air and watch it drop into the pool and sink to the bottom. The old man leans on his stick and stands up slowly. 'Thank you,' he says, smiling. 'That was very kind of you. Is there anything I can do for you?' You decide to ask him where each of the streets lead to. 'Going back the way you came takes you back to the harbour. If you turn left and head north, you will

come to the Grand Library. If you go straight on, you will end up at the market. Turning right will take you down to the boat moorings on the River Eltus.' If you want to go to the Grand Library, turn to **241**. If you want to go to the market, turn to **290**. If you want to go down to the river, turn to **263**.

147

You swim hard, cutting through the waves, and just avoid being snared by a tentacle of the Giant Octopus as it drags the boat underwater. You don't stop to look back and swim on towards the western shoreline thinking about poor Pinn. Turn to **204**.

148

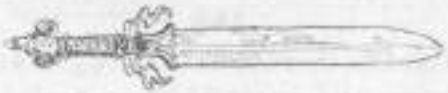
If you traded for the Potion of Health, gain 4 STAMINA points when you drink it. If you traded for the chainmail vest, add 1 to your *Attack Strength* when in combat. If you traded for the throwing dart, it can only be used once, but it will automatically inflict 3 STAMINA points of damage on your opponent. If you traded for the studded belt, gain 2 LUCK points. If you traded for the Witch's Rug, turn to **104**. If you did not acquire the Witch's Rug, turn to **200**.

149

The hawker brings his cart to a stop and gives you the helmet. You see the wings are made of brass, and apart from a small dent at the back, it appears to be a sturdy helmet. You try it on and it fits you perfectly. You give the man 1 Gold Piece and watch him set off again towards the quayside. Unbeknown to you, the helmet is cursed and will weaken you in combat. Lose 2 SKILL points. If you want to talk to somebody else, turn to **395**. If you want to walk up the street, turn to **228**.

150

You hand over 35 Gold Pieces to Grizzle, who looks a bit glum to be selling his warhammer. You are pleased with your purchase and bid farewell to the Goblin and head east into the jungle. Turn to **254**.



151

Your heart beats fast as you leap into the void, accelerating as you fall, doing your best to keep upright, but can't stop yourself from tumbling head-over-heels. You hit the water hard, hitting your head on a rock, and black out. You wake moments later with blurred vision and blood pouring from a gash on your forehead. You suddenly feel a sharp pain in your leg

and realize with horror that you are being attacked by flesh-eating SNAPPERFISH. You are too weak to defend yourself, and with their powerful bite, it does not take them long to strip all the flesh from your bones. Your adventure ends here.

152

You turn and run into the cave. The Plague Spiders swarm after you, trampling you under foot. You are semi-conscious and unable to defend yourself when the swarm starts to feed on your flesh. Your adventure ends here.

153

You throw the arrow on to the ground and when you reach for your sword, the old man blows hard on his hunting horn. You hear loud shouting and the sharp sound of studded boots on the cobblestones, and within seconds you are surrounded by five City Guards armed with spears. The Captain of the Guard walks over to the old man and says, 'Afternoon Brynn. What's going on here?' The old man tells him that you were about to steal the gold coins from the pool. The captain orders the Guards to take you away and lock you up. He looks at you fiercely and says, 'We do not take kindly to those who steal from our heroes.' If you want to apologize, turn to **85**. If you want to let the Guards arrest you, turn to **398**. If you want to try to escape, turn to **219**.

154

A light southerly breeze pushes your raft steadily north until you finally make landfall on the south-east tip of the mainland. Gain 1 LUCK point. Relieved to be back on dry land, you decide to follow the coast north. Turn to **236**.

155

He looks up and says cheerfully, 'That's Worple Wood. I take a lot of folk over there to go mushroom picking. The woods are full of them! Nobody lives in the woods apart from an old hermit who keeps himself to himself. I can't remember his name though. Anyway, have you decided what you want to do?' If you want to tell the boatman to row you over to the south bank, turn to **45**. If you want to tell him to row you up the river, turn to **376**. If you have not done so already and want to ask him if he knows where to find Arrika Root, turn to **221**.

156

You reach through the cell door bars and slip the brooch pin into the keyhole and twist. Not being able to see what you are doing makes it a difficult task. Roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **269**. If the number rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **102**.

157

Sylas smiles and says, 'What brings you to Kaynlesh-Ma?' If you want to reply that you have come to buy a Ring of Fire, turn to **379**. If you want to ask him if he knows where to find Arrika Root, turn to **94**.

158

The librarian smiles and says, 'Indeed we do! The end aisle is the map section. You'll see a stack of grey folders on the bookshelves on the left-hand side. They are full of maps!' You walk over to the bookshelf and open a folder filled with maps of Allansia, including a detailed map of Port Blacksand. The folder underneath it contains a large map of Arantis with Kaynlesh-Ma, Halak and Vymorna highlighted, and Phoenix Finger, the Ruins of Rabuskar, the Keep on Witches Hill and Phong Temple shown as monuments. You study the map in detail before deciding what to do. If you want to ask the librarian if she has any books on demons and demi-gods, turn to **185**. If you want to leave the library, you may either go back down the street and turn left at the crossroads to head east (turn to **290**) or turn back and go straight on at the crossroads to head south (turn to **263**).

159

You just manage to sidestep out of the way of the lunging Snake and strike it with your sword, causing it a deep wound. It recoils instantly and prepares to strike again. You must fight the GIANT SNAKE.

GIANT SNAKE *SKILL 7* *STAMINA 9*

If the Giant Snake wins two *Attack Rounds* in succession, turn to **349**. If you win without losing two *Attack Rounds* in succession, turn to **101**.

160

You panic when you see the deep bite mark on your arm. If you are chewing Arrika Root, turn to **256**. If you have not been chewing Arrika Root, turn to **206**.

161

The man's eyebrows rise, and his expression suddenly changes. 'How many Dragonblades ... do ... you ... want?' he asks laughing loudly, hardly able to get his words out. 'Five ... six?' His friends all fall about laughing, slapping their thighs and stamping their feet. They start swinging imaginary swords through the air and you realize you are wasting your time talking to them. If you want to enter the inn, turn to **184**. If you want to walk up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

162

You make good progress across the dusty, flat ground. You pass by a large rock with the words 'This Way to the Keep' and an arrow pointing east chiselled into it. You press on and eventually see a stone tower in the distance. Turn to **394**.

163

You soon arrive back at the slow-running River Eltus, where you turn left to walk east along the riverbank. Turn to **357**.

164

You walk down the corridor and through the archway into the courtyard. As you walk around the fountain, the door in front of you opens and one of the bald-headed ACOLYTES appears. He draws his long, curved knife and runs at you screaming.

ACOLYTE *SKILL 8* *STAMINA 6*

If you win, you pick up the Acolyte's curved knife and slip through the doorway leading to the outside, to escape before more Acolytes appear. Turn to **176**.

165

You hear the coin land in what sounds like a metal box on the other side of the door. You pull on the cord ringer and hear the dull clang of the bell. Moments later you hear footsteps approaching. The door creaks open a fraction, and you see a woman with brown eyes and long brown hair staring at you through the gap in the doorway. 'Who are you and what brought you here this day?' she asks brusquely in a strange accent. If you want to tell her your name and that you are on a mission to slay a Spider Demon, turn to **326**. If you want to reply that you are hoping to buy a Potion of Health, turn to **356**.

166

You call out to ask if anybody is there, and a man with a ponytail appears at the doorway holding a bow and arrow. He is wearing a baggy shirt and a waistcoat made from animal skins. He eyes you suspiciously and says in a deep voice, 'What brings you here, stranger?' If you want to reply that you are on a mission to slay a demon and need to find items to aid you, turn to **121**. If you want to ask if he would be willing to sell his bow and a quiver of arrows, turn to **296**.

167

You draw your sword just as the first Plague Spider bears down on you ready to strike with its fangs. You must fight it but are slow to wield your sword and must reduce your *Attack Strength* by 2 during the first *Attack Round*.

PLAGUE SPIDER *SKILL 10* *STAMINA 8*

If you win without losing any *Attack Rounds*, turn to **145**. If you win but lost one or more *Attack Rounds*, turn to **365**.

168

Captain Shanklin moves slowly but his cutlass skills are excellent. Fighting him barehanded means you must reduce your *Attack Strength* by 3 during each *Attack Round*.

PIRATE CAPTAIN *SKILL 8* *STAMINA 6*

If you win, turn to **106**. You may *Escape* after three *Attack Rounds* by running down the gangplank. Lose 2 STAMINA points and turn to **275**.

169

You climb out of the river and continue your trek, following the new tributary south. It's beginning to get dark by the time you pass by a large, beautiful bay some distance away on your right, but you keep going south to look for somewhere safe to sleep. You find an old canoe on the riverbank and decide to turn it upside down to sleep under. You make a campfire and settle down for the night and are soon fast asleep. Howling creatures wake you up from time to time, but the night passes without incident. You wake soon after dawn feeling refreshed and ready for the next challenge. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You gather up your belongings and set off at a brisk pace, heading south towards a line of trees that looks like light jungle terrain. Turn to **203**.

170

Grizzle bursts out laughing and says, 'By anythin', I wasn't meanin' my lovely skullcrusher. What would I smash the skulls with if I sold it? But go on, make me an offer I can't refuse. How about 35 Gold Pieces?' If you have and want to pay 35 Gold Pieces to buy Grizzle's warhammer, turn to **150**. If you have not done so already and want to buy his sword instead, turn to **329**. If you want to change your mind about buying something and continue your quest, turn to **254**.

171

The boatman shrugs and says, 'Nobody wants to go on the river today. I might as well pack up and go home. Enjoy your walk. The tree line you can see in the far distance is the western edge of the Whispering Jungle. Good luck with that!' You leave Kaynlesh-Ma in the warmth of the late-afternoon sun and walk briskly along the towpath following the meandering river until the towpath peters out into lush grassland. If you want to head directly towards the jungle, turn to **114**. If you want to continue walking along the riverbank, turn to **357**.

172

Using the hanging vines to haul yourself up, you commence your climb of the statue. You are nearly halfway up when suddenly the vine snaps. Roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **215**. If the number rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **274**.

One of the Fish Men surfaces and stands up holding his trident threateningly.

173

One of the Fish Men surfaces and stands up holding his trident threateningly. He has a humanoid-shaped body and a huge fish-like head. Speaking in a gurgling voice, he asks you if you are a Raider and you reply that you are on your own on an important mission, hoping the Fish Men might be able to help. He wades towards the shore and climbs out of the lake. You decide to tell him about your mission and how you desperately need a Dragonblade, which you heard could be for sale in the village. 'You heard right!' the Fish Man says in his strange voice. 'I own one of Kenzo Mamoosh's finest Dragonblades. I saw him throw it into the lake with my own eyes. But I'm not convinced by your story about a Spider Demon. If you want a Dragonblade that much, you are going to have to pay a big price for it. You can either give me 50 Gold Pieces or a large diamond or a large ruby for it. If you want to and are able to pay what the Fish Man is asking for it, turn to **262**. If you want to offer something else for the sword, turn to **338**.

174

As you reach for your sword, you do not see the barman's wife behind you who hits you over the head with an iron pan, knocking you out. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You wake up sometime later lying in an alleyway behind the inn with a thumping headache. You stand up slowly and stagger out of the alleyway, turning right to walk east up the cobbled street. Turn to **89**.

175

The woman opens the door fully and says, 'Something in your voice tells me you are telling the truth. My name is Zizi. Some people call me Princess Zizi, but I don't know why! I'm an alchemist and I might just have something you need. You'd better come in and tell me more.' You enter a large room lined with shelves filled with jars of herbs and minerals, and flasks of liquid bubbling away on top of tables. You relate the grim scenario painted by Nicodemus and how you must defeat Valmorka before it's too late. Zizi looks anxious and says, 'I don't have anything that you could use to slay the demon, but I can give you two potions that would help protect you.' She hands you a small stoppered bottle containing green liquid and another containing blue liquid. She unstoppers the first bottle and says, 'Drink this now. It will do you good. It's a Potion of Health.' You gulp down the liquid, which feels warm as it trickles down your throat. You feel suddenly full of energy. Gain 4 STAMINA points. 'And drink the blue liquid as soon as you see the demon. It's a Potion of Invisibility. You won't remain invisible for long, but it should give you enough time to do what you have to do.' You thank Zizi for her help and leave the keep, walking back down the steps to head east. Turn to **190**.

176

You push on through the jungle and eventually the trees start to thin out. The ground becomes dry and stony, and the vegetation turns into patches of long, dry grasses and thorn bushes with a scattering of dead trees. The open sky is a pleasant relief from the green roof of jungle. Seeing mountains in the distant north, you realize you have entered the Snakelands. If you want to head north towards Dragon Valley, turn to **309**. If you want to head south, turn to **21**.

177

The Guard walks over to you, leaving the captain and the other Guards to carry on interrogating the man. You see that he has a purple scar running down the left side of his face. 'You're not from these parts. I think I saw you earlier and you could be in big trouble. If you know what's good for you, slip a Gold Piece into my pocket and you can be on your way, no questions asked.' If you want to pay off the Guard, turn to **103**. If you can't pay or don't want to pay him, turn to **244**.

178

The fisherman inhales sharply and says, 'That's a long trip in a small boat and it will cost you 2 Gold Pieces, cash in hand if you don't mind, thank you.' If you want to pay 2 Gold Pieces to sail to the River Trask, turn to **33**. If you would rather decline the offer and carry on walking east along the coast, turn to **67**.

179

Even with the Spider Demon slain, an army of rogue Plague Spiders could still wipe out everybody in Allansia. The only way to stop that would be to seal the cavern. Turn to **79**.

180

You enjoy the show for a few minutes, watching a Dragon puppet drop down on top of the Orc and pretending to eat it, with the Wizard puppet jiggling up and down as though laughing. The crowd joins in the laughter and you decide you have seen enough. What you didn't see is the urchin who stealthily put his hand in your backpack and stole three of your *Provisions* and 1 Gold Piece. Make a note on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you want to look at the market stalls, turn to **351**. If you want to leave the market and walk back to the junction, turn to **325**.

181

You are exhausted after the gruelling combat with the Hill Giant but know there is no time to rest. You pick up the Giant's sword hoping it might be a Dragonblade but are disappointed to discover that it isn't. There is no point in taking it as it is too long and heavy for you to use in combat. You scramble up the mountain to the ledge in search of the Giant's cave, which you find almost immediately. There is a terrible stench in the cave, and you search it as quickly as you can. You find a pile of animal bones, a wooden club and an old treasure chest, which has had its lid torn off. Inside the chest you find a plate-metal gauntlet, a dented silver chalice, a small silver tin and 5 Gold Pieces. After taking the gold and silver, you examine the gauntlet, which you see is etched with writhing snakes. If you want to try the gauntlet on, turn to **340**. If you would rather leave it and make your way back to the beach, turn to **86**.

182

You have been struck by a poison dart. You pull it out of your neck and throw it on the ground. You start to feel dizzy and drop to your knees. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You shake your head trying to focus when you suddenly come face-to-face with a small, heavily tattooed, bare-chested man brandishing a blowpipe. You try to reach for your sword but pass out and slump forward, face down into the ground. By the time you regain consciousness, he is long gone and, with him, your rings and all your remaining *Provisions*. Lose 2 LUCK points. There is nothing you can do but to press on east, keeping a keen eye out for anything that moves. Turn to **226**.

183

You open the book on the bookmarked page and are surprised to find it blank. Random words start to appear on the page in black ink, each letter with red ink dripping off it like droplets of blood. The words suddenly rearrange themselves into a sentence that reads: 'The Book of Blood can never quench its thirst.' The pages start to turn red with the red drips under the letters bulging as though being filled up. At the same time, you begin the feel weaker. The book you are holding is

a Lesser Demon's tome from the Plane of Blood and it is draining your life's blood. Roll two dice and reduce your STAMINA by the number rolled. If you are still alive, you take the other Golden Skull and stagger out of the chamber to make your escape. Turn to **164**.

184

Just as you are about to enter the inn, the door is flung open by a beefy man wearing a white apron who throws a drunken fisherman out on to the street. He lands with a bump on the cobblestones, staggers to his feet, and shakes his fist at no one in particular. 'Those darned Spittle twins! The cheating rats took all my money with their tricksy dice game. They should have been thrown out of the Crooked Hand, not me! I'm going back in to teach them a lesson they won't forget,' the fisherman says, slurring his words before stumbling and falling flat on his face. He is soon fast asleep, snoring loudly. 'Two-Tooth Tom never learns, does he?' one of men says, chuckling. If you still want to go in the inn, turn to **143**. If you would rather walk east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

185

The librarian smiles and says, 'Yes, we do! If you look at the bookshelf on the right-hand side of the middle aisle, you'll see a collection of large books bound in black leather with gold lettering.' You walk over and find a book titled *Demons and Demi-Gods*. You flick through the section on demons and stop at a page dedicated to Valmorka, the Spider Demon. You stare at an etching of a bulbous, black-bodied spider with eight spindly, crab-like legs, and a four-armed upper torso and demonic head with twisted horns protruding from it. A shiver runs down your spine as you read how she was banished to the Plane of Bile by a grand wizard and vowed to return to destroy Allansia with an army of Plague Spiders. A sentence underlined in red ink says that Valmorka's powers of mind control would paralyze anybody in her line of sight unless they were protected by a Golden Skull charm. There is a section on the facing page entitled 'Useful Weapons' with a detailed description and illustration of a Dragonblade with its dragon skull pommel, elaborate guard and iridescent

steel blade. You slowly close the book and think what to do. If you want to ask the librarian if she has any maps of Arantis, turn to **158**. If you want to leave the library, you may either go back down the street and turn left at the crossroads to head east (turn to **290**) or turn back and go straight on at the crossroads to head south (turn to **263**).

186

You enter the jungle without further incident but make slow progress through the dense undergrowth. The warm, humid air saps your strength, and you have to watch your step as you navigate the tangled roots and the thorny plants. You hear the shrill call of colourful birds high up in the trees and the chatter of unseen animals, but press on resolutely, hacking your way through the hanging vines and low branches. You raise your sword to hack at the curtain of hanging vines blocking your way when what looks like one of the vines suddenly shoots out and tries to ensnare you. It is a GIANT SNAKE, and it is at least six metres long! Roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **159**. If the number rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **41**.

187

You brace yourself and prepare to rub the ring. If you know the words of the spell to trigger the Ring of Fire, turn to the number used in the spell. If you can't remember the number used in the spell, you will have to fight them with your sword. Turn to **98**.

188

You say goodbye to the fisherman and start your walk along the narrow beach, sword in hand. There are paw prints in the sand, and you keep a watchful eye out for predators that might leap out of the undergrowth to attack you. The sand becomes wet underfoot, and ahead you see a large boulder sticking out of the sand that has a skull and crossbones painted on it. If you want to keep walking along the beach, turn to **46**. If you want to head inland towards the mountains, turn to **279**.

189

You send the bucket clattering down the alleyway, but you just manage to stay on your feet. A wooden door opens on the left and you see the town crier who yells at you to come inside. The Giant Hornets are almost upon you, and you seize the chance to dive through the open doorway into his house. The town crier slams the door behind you to the unnerving sound of thousands of Giant Hornets buzzing noisily outside. 'That was a close one,' the town crier says, helping you to your feet. 'Those infernal Hornets keep coming back here terrorizing the place. Poor old Kevan the carpenter was stung to death last week. Horrible it was. Anyway, they'll be gone soon. I should introduce myself. My name is Sylas. Sit yourself down for a while. How about a currant bun to cheer you up? My sister baked them. Delicious they are.' If you would like a currant bun, turn to **120**. If you want to reply that you are not hungry, turn to **157**.

She has a cruel face with snake eyes and long, crooked horns protruding from her forehead.

190

You continue your walk along the coast and come to a pebble beach where you see a fisherman sitting in his small fishing boat repairing his nets. There is an island not far out to sea that is dominated by two jagged mountains with black peaks. Ahead in the distance, you see the eastern shoreline of Arantis. If you want to walk down to the beach to talk to the fisherman, turn to **110**. If you want to keep on walking east, turn to **67**.

191

You creep down the tunnel and become aware of sharp clicking sounds slowly getting louder. The tunnel bends sharply and suddenly you see her scurrying towards you on her eight spindly, crab-like legs. She has a cruel face with snake eyes and long, crooked horns protruding from her forehead. She has four leathery arms, and her gigantic abdomen is mottled dark green and black in colour. Even from afar there is no mistaking Valmorka, the Spider Demon. If you possess a Golden Skull charm, turn to **48**. If you do not have a Golden Skull charm, turn to **140**.

192

You walk along the beach, occasionally stabbing the sand with your sword and hear a dull clunk when it strikes something metallic. You tap down several times, each time hitting metal. You scrape away the sand to uncover a metal chest. You try to open it, but it is locked. If you have an iron key, turn to **280**. If you do not have an iron key, turn to **64**.

193

The fisherman can't believe that you want to explore more of the island and looks concerned during the short sail around to the other side. He steers the boat to the shore and says, 'Same as before: I'll wait for you here until the sun is overhead and then I'm sailing back to the mainland, with or without you.' You jump into the sea and wade ashore. There is a high bank of rocks stopping you from walking any further east around the island, and you have no option but to head inland. Turn to **210**.

194

The librarian frowns and says, 'Yes, there's a door at the back behind the last bookshelf on the left. Why do you ask? Are you in trouble? Are you running away from somebody?' She suddenly panics and starts frantically ringing the brass bell. You hear somebody call out followed by footsteps on the stairs. If you want to see who is coming up the stairs, turn to **302**. If you want to run to the back door, turn to **70**. If you want to leave the library by the front door, you may either go back down the street and turn left at the crossroads to head east (turn to **290**) or turn back and go straight on at the crossroads to head south (turn to **263**).

195

You make good progress and soon see Dragon Valley in the distance, which cuts through the mountains to separate Uron Heights from Craggen Heights with the entrance to the Wormholes on the Uron Heights side. You waste no time and enter the first cave entrance you come to with your sword drawn. Turn to **92**.

196

You give Barton 1 Gold Piece and watch him unbolt the door. He bows and beckons you to enter a small candlelit room that does not have any windows. You walk in the room and hear the door being bolted shut behind you followed by a muffled chuckle. There is a wooden box on a table with no obvious way to open it. The only markings on it are a sequence of numbers *3 7 15 31 ??* etched on the lid and also two square recesses. There are ten small metal cubes on the table marked from 0 to 9. You deduce you must work out the next number in the sequence before the time runs out and place two of the cubes into the recesses in the box lid to represent the number. If you know the answer, turn to that number. If you do not know the answer, turn to **265**.

197

The boatman steers his boat into the north bank. 'It's been nice talking to you,' he says cheerfully as you climb out of the boat. 'Enjoy your walk. I hope you find what you are looking for.' You say goodbye to the boatman and set off again on foot, following the river east. Turn to **135**.

198

You don't find any traps in the room and examine the objects on the table without touching them to see if they are booby-trapped. You see that the lid of one of the black boxes is slightly raised. If you want to lift the lid, turn to **348**. If you want to grab the Golden Skull and quickly make your escape, turn to **289**.

199

You watch the barman fill the glass from a large jug and place it on the counter. 'That will be 1 Gold Piece,' he says brusquely. If you want to pay 1 Gold Piece for the apple juice, turn to **248**. If you want to tell the barman that his apple juice is too expensive, turn to **347**.

200

The hermit smiles and says, 'Well, it was nice to meet you, and I can't let you go without a little gift. Help yourself to one of the parcels in the wooden bucket by the door and open it when you are feeling a little peckish.' You thank the hermit and set off again. You decide to unwrap his gift, which turns out to be a small box of nuts and raisins, and you enjoy the tasty snack as you walk along. Add 1 STAMINA point. Turn to **387**.

201

The box contains a large diamond, which you slip into your pocket. If you want to open the black book, turn to **318**. If you want to grab the other Golden Skull and make your escape. Turn to **289**.

202

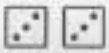
You lie down on the ground, concealing yourself as best as you can. The noise of the hooves grows louder but eventually fades away into the distance. You stand up, and with the riders gone, you set off again. The walk is long and tiring and saps your energy. Lose 1 STAMINA point. With the trees on the edge of the jungle looming large, you press on knowing the urgency of the mission. Some distance away to your left, you catch sight of a tall stone pinnacle on the edge of the jungle. If you want to make a detour to look at the pinnacle, turn to **231**. If you would rather head straight into the Whispering Jungle, turn to **186**.

203

You head into the trees and make good progress through the undergrowth. You are surrounded by the sound of croaking frogs, chirping insects and the shrill call of birds high up in the trees, and suddenly above it all, you hear a man's voice calling for help. If you want to walk towards where the call is coming from, turn to **362**. If you want to ignore it and keep heading south, turn to **232**.

204

You swim slowly to the shore and crawl out of the sea exhausted. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You take off your backpack to dry it out and are dismayed to find that your remaining *Provisions* disintegrated in the sea. Delete them from your *Adventure Sheet*. You bandage your wounds and head north along the coast towards the estuary. When you arrive at the mouth of the river, you see a raft tied to a pontoon and next to it, a bamboo hut with a roof made of long, broad leaves. There are two woven baskets outside the open front door. If you want to walk on past the hut, turn to **49**. If you want to call out to see if there is anybody inside the hut, turn to **166**.



205

The old man shouts at you angrily when you reach down into the water. He leans over towards the statue and pushes the end of his walking stick into a small recess in its left ankle, which triggers the arrow to be released from the statue's bow. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **47**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **317**.

206

Your blood suddenly feels like it is flowing too fast through your veins and you become hot. Your mouth tastes disgusting with thick goop bubbling in the back of your throat, and your eyes feel like they are bulging out of their sockets. The flesh surrounding the bite starts to rot and you realize with horror that you are turning into a Zombie. You have failed to save Allansia. Your adventure ends here.

207

You leap away from the mound, brushing the ants off you at the same time, trying to ignore the fiery pain from the many stings you have suffered. The Fire Ants of Arantis are poisonous, and small blisters soon appear on your neck, arms and legs. Lose 2 STAMINA points. Luckily you find a clump of chickweed and rub the leaves over the bites to stop them from becoming infected. Resisting the urge to scratch the blisters, you continue your trek through the jungle, and it's not long before you arrive at the edge of a deep ravine where you are forced to head south-east along the ridge. Turn to **288**.

208

The balloon is engulfed by fire and bursts into flame causing the basket to fall out of the sky. You hurtle towards the ground and crash into the mountain with fatal results. Your adventure ends here.

209

As soon as you touch your sword, a bolt of lightning slams into your chest, which sends you flying backwards into one of the bookshelves. Roll one die and reduce your STAMINA points by the number rolled. You struggle to stand up and stagger out of the front door. Back in the street, you may either walk back to the crossroads and turn left to head east (turn to **290**) or carry on straight at the crossroads to head south (turn to **263**).

You see a monstrous Hill Giant, armed with a huge sword, standing on a ledge.

210

You hack your way through the undergrowth and finally emerge from the trees at the foot of a steep-sided mountain that has very little vegetation growing on its black granite slopes. You walk along the base of the mountain looking for a cave where treasure might be hidden. Suddenly you hear a loud roar and look up to see a monstrous HILL GIANT, armed with a huge sword, standing on a ledge above you, and angrily stomping his feet. His bloated body is covered with swollen boils, some of which are leaking pus. Long, crooked horns stick out from his lumpy forehead. He suddenly jumps down from the ledge and lands in front of you in a cloud of dust. He picks up a large rock with his free hand and hurls it at you. Roll two dice. If the total rolled is the same or less than your SKILL score, turn to **57**. If the total rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **3**.

211

The berries are juicy but taste bitter. They are bloodberries and they are toxic. You begin to feel nauseous and are suddenly violently ill. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You drink some water from your flask and begin the second day of your quest feeling unwell as you trudge south-east through the jungle. Turn to **233**.

212

You slip on a loose stone but manage to regain your footing. You wade over to the other side of the river and climb out. You push on east, walking gradually downhill into an area of dense foliage, and almost miss seeing a small canvas bag lying under a broad-leafed bush. You pick up the bag and see it is tied at the top with twine. It feels like it contains some coins, and you cut it open and find 5 Gold Pieces. Gain 1 LUCK point. You pocket the coins and carry on walking. Turn to **292**.

213

You run down the path and listen at the door. You don't hear anything and try the handle. The door isn't locked and opens into a large courtyard with a marble fountain of four goat-headed demons spouting water into a large pool in the centre. There are stone benches around the pool and an archway on the other side of the courtyard. If you want to walk through the archway, turn to **75**. If you want to leave the temple, turn to **59**.

214

You begrudgingly pay the smirking Goblin. Lose 1 Gold Piece and 1 LUCK point. You decide not to waste any more time with the Goblins. If you want to walk over to the bar to talk to the barman, turn to **235**. If you would rather leave the inn and head east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

215

As you fall, you manage to grab hold of the Warrior's axe handle and save yourself. You pull yourself up and sit on the handle. You are just able to reach the leather pouch and open it to find 30 Gold Pieces inside. Gain 1 LUCK point. You grab hold of another vine and slide down to the ground. You walk down the steps back to the riverbank and, seeing the thickness of the undergrowth, you decide to go back the way you came and cross the river by the rope bridge. Turn to **368**.

216

The first arrow that hits you catches you completely by surprise. You see it sticking out of your shoulder and wonder how it happened. The second arrow sinks painfully into your midriff. You turn around and see four hooded OUTLAWS in long sand-coloured robes closing in on you on foot. Their loaded bows are pointed straight at you, and the third arrow to hit you is fatal. Your adventure ends here.

217

You just manage to stay in the saddle and keep control of your horse. The growling WILD DOGS circle you, their slavering jaws wide open revealing long sharp teeth. You urge your horse on, but it refuses to move. You have no choice but to jump down and take on the WILD DOGS with your sword. The leader of the pack leaps at you as soon as your feet touch the ground.

WILD DOG *SKILL 6* *STAMINA 5*

If you win without losing an *Attack Round*, turn to **283**. If you win but lost one or more *Attack Rounds*, turn to **371**.

218

The fisherman frowns but doesn't say anything. He pulls the anchor up and unties the sail, and just when you think he is about to sit down, he lashes out with his boot and kicks you overboard. As he sails away, he shakes his fist at you and shouts, 'I saw the gold coins bulging in your pocket, you snake-in-the-grass! Enjoy your time on Blackrock!' You have no choice but to swim ashore. All remaining *Provisions* you have are washed away. Delete them from your *Adventure Sheet*. You spend the rest of the morning making a crude raft out of bamboo and vines, which you push out to sea and jump aboard. With nothing but a piece of wood to steer with, you hope the southerly wind and a following tide will carry you back

to the mainland. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **154**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **372**.

219

You act quickly and charge at the nearest Guard. You manage to push him aside and run off. The Captain of the Guard screams at his men to hurl their spears at you. Roll one die. If you roll 1 to 3, turn to **7**. If you roll a 4 or 5, turn to **278**. If you roll a 6, turn to **78**.

220

You gulp down the contents of the bottle and hear Valmorka's blood-curdling howl when she loses sight of you as the Potion of Invisibility takes effect. You seize the moment and run forward with your sword raised to battle the screaming Demon. If your sword is a Dragonblade, add 5 to your *Attack Strength* during the first three *Attack Rounds* before the effects of the potion wear off. Add 3 to your *Attack Strength* during all *Attack Rounds* thereafter. If you do not possess a Dragonblade, add 2 to your *Attack Strength* during the first three *Attack Rounds* until the effects of the potion wear off with no *Attack Strength* bonus during *Attack Rounds* thereafter.

VALMORKA *SKILL 14* *STAMINA 18*

If you win, turn to **374**.

221

He looks at you a little puzzled and says, 'I wasn't expecting you to ask that! I presume you know Arrika is a river plant, but you won't find any floating down the River Eltus. You'll only find Arrika on the River Trask, which is a long way east from here. I could take you part of the way if it helps?' If you want the boatman to row you up the river, turn to **376**. If you have not done so already and want to ask him about the woodland on the south bank, turn to **155**.

222

You leap into the basket and watch the bearded man release hot air into his balloon from a dragon-shaped stoppered jug. 'Just putting some fire in its belly!' he says excitedly as the balloon rises slowly off the ground. He introduces himself as Vargas and asks you where you are headed. You tell him that you are on your way to the Wormholes but need to find a Dragonblade first. 'Well, you are in luck my friend because this south-easterly

wind will carry us all the way to Shazâar where you should be able to buy a Dragonblade in the Thieves Market. The trip will cost you 5 Gold Pieces. Otherwise, I'll drop you off at the Sun Pools as we pass over them!' he says, grinning. If you want to pay 5 Gold Pieces to fly to Shazâar, turn to **330**. If you want to jump out at the Sun Pools, turn to **252**.

223

Relieved to have survived the Giant Lizard's attack, you push on into a dense part of the jungle where the trees are tall and wide with their long, fat roots stretching out across the jungle floor like giant snakes. Thin shafts of sunlight break through the thick foliage overhead. Ahead, you see a very large tree with its roots partially covering what looks like the entrance to a mine. The ground in front of the entrance is littered with broken skulls. You suddenly hear the voice of somebody who sounds very annoyed. A green-skinned creature appears at the entrance muttering to himself. He's carrying a sack filled with skulls and a warhammer, which has an orange glow. It's a GOBLIN. He empties the sack on the ground and starts smashing the skulls with his warhammer. He curses when he's finished and turns to go back inside the mine. If you want to talk to him, turn to **116**. If you want to attack the Goblin, turn to **355**. If you want to leave him and continue your quest, turn to **254**.

224

The captain orders the Pirates to search your pockets. They are excited to find ten coins and do not bother to search the others hidden away. Lose 10 Gold Pieces and 1 LUCK point. Finding nothing else of use to them, the Pirates push you down the gangplank and throw you off the boat. Turn to **275**.

225

The helmet belonged to a Warrior who was ambushed and killed by Lizard Men. It is sturdy and fits you perfectly. Gain 1 LUCK point and add 1 to your *Attack Strength* during combat. Pleased with your new armour, you head north. Turn to **195**.

226

You carry on trekking through the jungle and are pleased to see the welcome sight of a beach and the sea through the trees. If you are wearing a gold horseshoe brooch, turn to **378**. If you are not wearing this brooch, turn to **23**.

227

The woman smiles and opens the door fully. 'Larch?' she says excitedly. 'You saw Larch? That's wonderful. I haven't seen him in a long time. How was the old goat? He probably told you my name is Zizi. Some people call me Princess Zizi, although I don't know

why because I'm an alchemist. But that means I might just have something you need. You'd better come in and tell me more.' You enter a large room lined with shelves filled with jars of herbs and minerals, and flasks of liquid bubbling away on top of tables. You relate the grim scenario painted by Nicodemus and how you must defeat Valmorka before it's too late. Zizi looks anxious and says, 'I don't have anything that you could use to slay a demon, but I can give you some potions that might help.' She hands you three small stoppered bottles, one containing green liquid, one containing blue liquid and the third containing red liquid. She unstoppers the first bottle and says, 'If you know what's good for you, drink this now. It's a Potion of Health.' You gulp down the green liquid, which feels warm as it trickles down your throat. You feel suddenly full of energy. Gain 4 STAMINA points. 'Drink the blue liquid as soon as you see the Demon. It's a Potion of Invisibility. You won't remain invisible for long, but it should give you enough time to do what you have to do. But whatever you do, don't drink the red liquid. It's deadly poison. Save it for your worst enemy!' She looks down at her hand and says, 'And I think I should give you this ring. Larch gave it to me many years ago. It's a Ring of Good Fortune.' Gain 2 LUCK points. You thank Zizi for her generosity and leave the Keep, walking back down the steps to head east. Turn to **190**.

You see a man running down the street towards you holding on to his hat and ringing a bell.

228

You see a man running down the street towards you holding on to his hat with one hand and ringing a bell with his other hand. A loud buzzing sound fills the air, which is coming from a large black cloud of insects trailing a short distance behind him. 'The Hornets are coming! The Hornets are coming! Run for your life!' he shouts desperately before turning sharply right and disappearing down an alleyway. People scurry away and, moments later, the street is empty. You look up and see the cloud of GIANT HORNETS spiralling down to attack you. If you want to run down the alleyway after the town crier, turn to **51**. If you want to try to open the door of the nearest house, turn to **390**. If you want to jump into the horse trough, turn to **281**.

229

By the time you come out of the woods it is almost dark. Ahead, all you can see is a dusty plain. You look around for somewhere to sleep but nowhere seems to offer much protection from the creatures of the night. You walk on and trip over a rock and wonder whether you should chance sleeping out in the open or risk carrying on. If you want to bed down for the night, turn to **93**. If you want to keep going, turn to **334**.

230

You stand for a moment waiting for your body to react to the bite, but nothing happens. Chewing Arrika Root has made you immune to the bite of the Zombie predator. You sigh with relief but hardly have time to think before the other two Plague Spiders bear down on you. Fight them one at a time with the reassuring knowledge that you will not turn into a Zombie yourself.

	SKILL	*STAMINA*
First PLAGUE SPIDER	*9*	*8*
Second PLAGUE SPIDER	*10*	*7*

If you win, turn to **392**.

231

You eventually reach the stone pinnacle, which stands some ten metres high in a bare patch of ground, where all the surrounding vegetation has turned black. The pinnacle is well weathered, and the runes etched in the stone are barely legible. If you want to try to read the runes, turn to **36**. If you want to step away from the pinnacle and head into the Whispering Jungle, turn to **304**.

232

You continue your trek, and it's not long before you emerge from the jungle on to scrubland. In the distance you can see some ruins on the southern tip of the mainland. Looking right, you see the west coast of Arantis. Looking left, you see nothing but scrubland. If you want to walk to the ruins, turn to **125**. If you want to head east along the south coast, turn to **162**.

233

The ravine starts to slope down, and you slowly descend until you find yourself walking along the edge of a fast-flowing river. The vegetation is even more lush and tangled here with a thick cluster of trees, ferns and long-leaved plants filling the jungle floor. Ahead, you hear the constant roar of water and soon you arrive at the top of a waterfall. Looking down, you see the water crashing into a large pool some twenty metres below where the river flows south-east. There are three smaller pools next to the main pool, and you are surprised to see somebody standing in one of them. If you want to wade into the river and jump down into the main pool below, turn to **311**. If you want to climb down the side of the waterfall to the pools, turn to **141**. If you want to wade across the river over to the opposite bank, turn to **259**.

234

Your aim is poor on the rocking boat, and the spear flies past the Bandit and lands harmlessly in the sea. He lets loose another arrow from close range, which strikes you in the shoulder. Lose 2 STAMINA points. The canoe comes alongside the boat and two of the SEA BANDITS jump aboard brandishing their cutlasses. The boat is narrow, and you can fight them one at a time.

	SKILL	*STAMINA*
First SEA BANDIT	*7*	*7*
Second SEA BANDIT	*7*	*8*

If you win, turn to **11**.

235

The barman is busy drying tankards and stacking them on a shelf on the back wall. He turns to you and says, 'What's your poison?' If you want to reply that you would like a glass of apple juice, turn to **199**. If you want to tell him that you are looking to buy a magic ring, turn to **50**.

236

You walk along the coast and eventually reach a long, white-sand beach where you see a small, single-masted boat that has been left abandoned. Looking further along the coast, you see the wide estuary of a river, which runs into the sea from the north and, beyond that, there is a mountain range in the far distance. If you want to carry on walking north towards the estuary, turn to **192**. If you want to inspect the boat, turn to **124**.

237

You roll over and over in a ball of dust before finally coming to a halt. You lie there for a moment wondering if you have injured yourself and are relieved to discover that you only have a twisted ankle and a cut on your arm. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You pick yourself up and set off towards the Wormholes. Turn to **293**.

238

You run down the street as fast as you can. You hear the Captain of the Guard shout, 'Don't worry Vasco – let's deal with the thief we've caught red-handed. We can deal with the other one later.' Relieved to hear his words, you slow down and walk on. Turn to **263**.

239

You step on to the rug and glance at Larch, who stands facing you with his arms outstretched. He mumbles some words that you don't understand and suddenly the rug starts to rise slowly off the ground. It feels quite unstable, and you drop down on to your knees to hold on. As the rug gains height, Larch calls out to you. 'If you decide to visit Princess Zizi, tell her Larch sent you.' The rug suddenly shoots off, and you look back to see the dwindling figure of Larch waving at you frantically. Worple Wood is soon left behind as the rug flies south-east following the river below. The light is beginning to fade as you pass over an area of jungle terrain to the plain beyond where you slowly begin to descend towards the southern coastline. The rug glides down and lands softly on the dusty ground just as the sun is setting. As soon as you step off the rug, it rises up and heads back the way it came. There are some boulders nearby that look like they might offer some protection for the night. Lying down with your back against a large boulder, you soon fall asleep. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You wake early the next morning and see a stone tower not far away in the east, which must be the Keep on Witches Hill. Turn to **394**.

240

The Goblin's eyes light up at the mention of food. He devours everything you give him in seconds, burps, and wipes his mouth on the back of his hand. 'That's better!' he says, belching again. 'My name's Grizzle. I call meself a headhunter! I come here lookin' for tiny charms called Golden Skulls. Before it was a mine, this place was a tomb where the Bone Keepers kept their skulls, and when they dug the tunnel longer, they found gold. People heard about it and that started a gold rush. The Bone Keepers left, leavin' the skulls behind. Some miners made magic charms with their gold and hid 'em in the skulls for sake keepin', and a few got forgotten about. I've been smashing up skulls ever since lookin' for 'em! I've only ever found one, and I sold it to the Crimson Priests of Phong who live east of here. They're an evil cult of demon worshippers but they pay a good price for magic charms! Anyway, I didn't find any today, so I'm off unless you want to buy somethin'? I'll sell you anythin' I 'ave. I'm skint!' If you want to offer to buy Grizzle's sword, turn to **329**. If you want to buy his warhammer, turn to **170**. If you want to thank him for his time and continue your quest, turn to **254**.

241

You hurry along the street passing a meeting hall and some large houses before it comes to an end at a magnificent sandstone building. Its architecture is reminiscent of Kaynlesh-Ma the learned city of old. It is double fronted with tall windows and two stone columns on either side of a marble staircase leading up to polished wooden doors. There is a brass sign on one of the columns with the words Grand Library inscribed on it. If you want to enter the library, turn to **360**. If you want to go back and turn left to head east at the crossroads, turn to **290**. If you want to go back and go straight on at the crossroads to head south, turn to **263**.

242

You quickly rummage through your backpack to find a potion bottle. If you have a small bottle containing blue liquid that you want to drink, turn to **220**. If you have a small bottle containing red liquid that you want to drink, turn to **111**. If you cannot find the potion, turn to **343**.

243

The fisherman looks over at the island and says, 'Not many people venture on to Blackrock Island and live to tell the tale! It's inhabited by terrifying creatures, which is the reason why Pirates bury their treasure there. They say many chests are buried on the island and rumour has it that Captain Bartella hid his Dragonblade there. If you have the courage to set foot on the island, I'll take you there for 2 Gold Pieces and a share of the gold you find.' If you want to sail to the island, turn to **384**. If you would rather ask him to sail you around the coast to the mouth of the River Trask, turn to **178**. If you would rather wish him good day and carry on walking east, turn to **67**.

244

The Guard gives you a stern look and whispers quietly in your ear, 'If you don't give me a little gift, you are going to regret it. Do you see the captain behind me? He's not a very nice man. If I call out that you are attacking me, he will come over and jump up and down on you with his hobnail boots, then lock you up and throw away the key. So, what are you going to give me?' If you have a silver spoon or a silver charm that you are willing to give him, turn to **96**. If you don't have a silver item or don't want to give him one, you must draw your sword and fight him, turn to **271**.

The man is wearing an old helmet and a rusty breastplate, and is cleaning his fingernails with a dagger.

245

The man is wearing an old helmet and a rusty breastplate over his shirt with his britches tucked into his boots. He is cleaning his fingernails with the tip of his dagger, and when he sees you, he jumps off the barrel and slips it into his right boot. You notice that half of the little finger on his left hand is missing. 'Greetings, my name is Barton. I haven't seen you before. You must be new in town,' he says jollily. 'I presume you're here because somebody told you about the Room of Doom? It's the most fun you can have in Kaynlesh-Ma for 1 Gold Piece! The rules are simple. You give me 1 Gold Piece and I open the door. You go inside the room and I close the door. If you manage to open the puzzle box on the table before the sand in my hourglass drops from the top bulb to the bottom bulb, I'll give you 5 Gold Pieces. If you don't open it in time, I'll open the door and you can be on your way. Well? Do you want to give it a go?' If you want to take the challenge, turn to **196**. If you would rather leave the market and walk back to the junction, turn to **325**.

246

You cup your mouth with both hands and call for help as loudly as you can. Fortunately, the wind is coming from the west, and your voice carries all the way to the fisherman. He pulls up his anchor and sails round the island to find you. By the time you see him, you are almost waist-deep in the quicksand. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **142**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **380**.

247

The ring handle is ice-cold to the touch, and your fingers stick to it like glue. Your hand feels numb and you struggle to prise your fingers off the ringer. You shake your hand vigorously until it starts to tingle. You draw your sword but struggle to hold it firmly in your hand. A freeze spell was cast on the ring handle, which has deadened some of the nerves in your sword arm. Lose 2 SKILL points. You sheathe your sword and walk back down the steps to carry on walking east, turn to **190**.

248

After giving the barman 1 Gold Piece, you gulp down the apple juice. It is very tasty and refreshing. Gain 1 STAMINA point. If you want to ask the barman if he knows where you can buy magic rings, turn to **50**. If you would rather leave the inn and head east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

249

You dream about Demons and Plague Spiders and wake up in the middle of the night still unable to move. You start to panic when you hear footsteps coming down the corridor. The crimson-robed Acolytes open the cell door and carry you off without speaking. You are taken outside and placed on a stone slab surrounded by a circle of crimson-robed men. At the first light of dawn, the High Priest in the feathered headdress begins his chant. The Crimson Priests of Phong are about to make another offering to Sith, the Demon Prince of the Abyss. Your adventure is over.

250

The charm protects you from the evil powers of snake artefacts. No harm comes to you, and you set off again on your trek through the jungle unaware of the ring's demonic magic. Turn to **133**.

251

The Barbarian's expression turns serious again. 'My brother perished in that dungeon trying to win the purse of 10,000 Gold Pieces. He went in and never came out. You didn't by chance meet him, did you? His name was Throm.' If you want to say 'yes', turn to **105**. If you want to say 'no', turn to **332**.

252

The balloon rises slowly into the sky, and you begin to drift gently north-east over the Whispering Jungle. Vargas keeps looking over the side of the basket and begins letting air out from the balloon when he sees what he's looking for. 'We are approaching the Sun Pools,' he yells as the balloon slowly descends. 'I can't put her down in the trees so get ready to jump.' You see a long, twisting river below and a huge waterfall that runs down into a wide pool with three smaller pools nearby. Vargas takes the balloon down as far as he dares, with you gliding just above the treetops towards the pool. 'Now!' he shouts loudly in your ear. Turn to **151**.

253

If you want to toss a Gold Piece into the pool, turn to **4**. If you want to toss a Copper Piece into the pool, turn to **146**.

254

You walk through the jungle wondering about how much time you have left to find the items you need to defeat the Spider Demon before her army of Plague Spiders rampages across the land. Lost in thought, you are suddenly unsure if you are going in the right direction. You decide to climb a tree to get your bearings and see, much to your surprise, the top of a red sandstone temple less than a kilometre away due east. As you climb down, you hear a loud buzzing sound. A huge Hawk Wasp with orange wings flies out of a crevice in the tree and you unknowingly brush it with your boot. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **55**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **335**.

255

The old man frowns and says, 'Do I look like somebody who would know anything about such things? No, I don't. So, go away and leave me in peace.' If you want to do as the hermit says and continue south, turn to **387**. If you want to threaten the hermit, turn to **68**.

256

You stand for a moment waiting for your body to react to the bite, but nothing happens. Chewing Arrika Root has made you immune to the bite of the Zombie predators. Turn to **392**.

257

The dog starts barking loudly when you get close. The boy tries to quieten the dog down, but it keeps on barking. 'She might calm down if we shake hands,' the boy says in a friendly voice. You hold out your hand and shake it with his. He then bows before doing a double back flip, losing his balance and falling against you, which sets off the dog barking again. 'Sorry!' he shouts.

'I'd better take Lola home. She always gets over-excited when she meets strangers. Nice talking to you! Bye!' The boy runs off with his dog bounding alongside him and is soon out of sight. While thinking about what to do next, you casually jingle the coins in your pocket and realize some are missing. The boy is a pickpocket who stole the coins when he fell against you. Lose 2 Gold Pieces and 1 LUCK point. If you want to walk over to the bearded men, turn to **373**. If you want to walk past them and on up the street, turn to **228**.

258

Keeping as still as possible, you gently rub the ring trying desperately to remember the magic words. If you want to say 'three, two, one, fire', turn to **298**. If you want to say 'one, two, three, fire', turn to **359**.

259

You wade slowly across the river doing your best to keep your balance in the fast-flowing waters. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **212**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **115**.

260

You untie the bag and start rubbing salt on the Mud Worms. They shrivel up and drop off your legs, leaving tiny marks on your skin. Fortunately, you are free of infection and able to continue your trek, following the new tributary south. It's beginning to get dark by the time you pass by a large, beautiful bay over on your right, but you keep going south to look for somewhere safe to sleep. You find an old canoe on the riverbank and decide to turn it upside down to sleep under. You make a campfire and settle down for the night and are soon fast asleep. Howling creatures wake you up from time to time, but the night passes without incident. You wake soon after dawn feeling refreshed and ready for the next challenge. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You gather up your belongings and set off at a brisk pace, heading south towards a line of trees that looks like light jungle terrain. Turn to **203**.

261

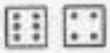
You urge your horse into a steady gallop across the grassland and are making good progress when you hear loud barking coming from behind you. A pack of six snarling WILD DOGS is closing in on you, which spooks your horse. It whinnies loudly and rears up on its hind legs. Roll two dice. If the total rolled is the same or less than your SKILL score, turn to **217**. If the total rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **12**.

262

You tell the Fish Man that he should believe you and that it's a matter of life or death that you defeat the Spider Demon. You hand over the payment feeling slightly resentful, which the Fish Man senses. 'I feel you might be telling the truth after all, stranger. But at least the Dragonblade is now yours. Follow me.' Turn to **119**.

263

You hurry down the street passing a candlemaker, a shoemaker and other craft stores, but with Nicodemus's words of warning about not wasting time ringing in your ears, you do not stop to go in any of them. The street finally ends at a towpath on the bank of the River Eltus, which flows from east to west, out to sea. There is woodland on the opposite side of the river and, looking left, you see a dense tree line in the far distance. There are rowing boats tied to posts along the edge of the towpath gently bobbing up and down on the slow-running river. A man wearing a cloth cap and a baggy white shirt with his sleeves rolled up is sitting in one of the boats reeling in his fishing line. He looks up and says, 'Can I help you? I charge 1 Gold Piece for an hour on the river if that is something you would like to do.' If you want to go for a boat ride, turn to **366**. If you would rather decline the boatman's offer and walk east along the towpath, turn to **171**.



264

You feel you should have reached the temple and decide to climb another tree. You look out over the treetops and see the temple is quite some distance away. You realize that you must have drifted north. Lose 1 LUCK point. You climb down and head south-east, cursing your poor sense of direction. In your haste, you walk through a thorn bush that is mildly poisonous. Your leg is pricked by sharp thorns that draw blood. Lose 1 STAMINA point. You ignore the pain and walk on, soon passing moss-covered stone idols of snake-headed people and winged creatures. You crouch down and keep walking, treading softly, sword in hand. Turn to **367**.

265

You eventually run out of time, and hear the door being unbolted. Light pours in and you see the smiling face of Barton in the doorway gesturing for you to step outside. 'Never mind. Better luck next time,' he says insincerely. 'I hope you had fun.' Feeling a bit annoyed with yourself, you hurry out of the market. Turn to **325**.

266

The Barbarian looks at you sternly as you walk past him and says, 'You might need some help if you are on your way to the Wormholes.' If you want to change your mind and cut him loose, turn to **35**. If you want to ignore him and keep going, turn to **291**.

267

You examine your wounds for teeth and claw marks. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **356**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **60**.

268

You open the heavy door and enter a crowded room that has a wooden bar running the length of the far wall and rowdy fisherman sitting at round tables bragging about their catches. You scan the room, but the four men are nowhere to be seen. You ask a ruddy-cheeked lady delivering drinks to a table if she saw four men come in moments ago, but she shakes her head. 'Not me ducky,' she howls. 'I never saw nothin'. It's better not to see anythin' if yer know what I mean!' There is a beefy man in a white apron standing behind the bar busily serving drinks to noisy customers. If you want to walk over to speak to the barman, turn to **235**. If you would rather leave the inn and walk east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

269

Much to your relief, the lock turns and you are able to push the cell door open. You tiptoe over to the cupboard and retrieve your belongings and climb the stairs. If you want to turn left at the top of the stairs and leave the temple, turn to **164**. If you want to turn right at the top of the stairs to walk along the corridor, turn to **320**.

270

You try to plug the leak but cannot stop the boat from sinking. As you float out to sea, you catch your calf on a rusty nail as the boat goes down. You swim towards the shore and suddenly feel a terrible pain in your lower leg. Attracted by the smell of your blood, a SHARK powers through the water and bites a chunk out of your calf. Lose 4 STAMINA points. If you are still alive, you pull the knife from your belt to defend yourself. Fighting the Shark in the rough sea is challenging, and you must reduce your *Attack Strength* by 2 during each *Attack Round*.

SHARK *SKILL 7* *STAMINA 6*

If you win, turn to **42**.

271

The GUARD looks surprised to see you draw your sword but reacts quickly and thrusts his spear at you.

CITY GUARD *SKILL 6* *STAMINA 7*

You may *Escape* after two *Attack Rounds* (lose 2 STAMINA points and turn to **294**), or if you win, you must fight the other GUARDS who are closing in on you (turn to **344**).

272

The Barbarian tells you that a rogue Baron called Sukumvit built a monster-filled dungeon in Fang to attract visitors and offered a purse of 10,000 Gold Pieces to the first person who came out alive. 'That wasn't my brother,' Thawne says with an anguished look on his face. 'He went in and never came out. I wish I knew how it ended for him. I know he would have died a hero.' You sympathize and tell him that your mission today is likely to be more dangerous than venturing into a prize dungeon but stop short of telling him why. With the cave entrance just a few hundred metres away, Thawne stops and says, 'Enough reminiscing. This is as far as I go. Goodbye.' He walks off in the direction of Dragon Valley leaving you to enter the cave. Turn to **92**.

273

You enter a cluttered living room, which has floor-to-ceiling shelves crammed with books. 'Come in! Excuse the mess! My name's Larch. I was named after the tree in my mother's garden,' he says with a chuckle. 'What brings you to Worple Wood?' You decide to tell him about your mission and your search for items to help you defeat the Spider Demon. 'Oh, my goodness,' he says, looking very anxious. 'That's extremely worrisome, but I have items that might aid you on your quest.' He points to an old oak table on which there's a rolled-up rug, a silver dragon brooch, a glass phial, a chainmail vest, a throwing dart and a leather belt studded with silver stars. 'The rug is a Witch's Rug, which would carry you all the way to the Keep on Witches Hill. An old acquaintance of mine called Princess Zizi lives there although she's not actually a Princess, or a Witch for that matter. She's an alchemist and, like me, she doesn't like visitors, but I'm sure she would offer you her help if you told her about your mission. I know the brooch doesn't look anything special, but it will protect you from dragon fire. The phial contains a Potion of Health. The vest will help defend you, of course. The dart is a powerful magic missile. I've no idea what the belt does but you have to admit those silver stars look good! I don't really want to sell any of my treasures but, given what you have told me, I would be happy to trade for them. I need oil for my lantern as I'm fed up with sitting in the dark. I need a mirror because I've forgotten what I look like. I need a telescope so I can see who is snooping up on me. And I need a magnifying glass for reading. My eyes aren't what they were!' If you possess a flask of oil, a mirror, a telescope or a magnifying glass, and want to trade with the hermit, turn to **361**. If you don't have these items or don't want to trade, turn to **200**.

274

You reach out to grab hold of the Warrior's axe handle as you fall but fail to hang on and land heavily on the stone steps. Roll one die and reduce your STAMINA by the number rolled. If you are still alive, you have no choice but to walk down the steps back to the riverbank and seeing the thickness of the undergrowth, you decide to go back the way you came and cross the river by the rope bridge. Turn to **368**.

275

Nicodemus looks very annoyed and says, 'That was your first and last chance. Any more of your foolishness and I'll turn you into a frog and find somebody else for the mission! Now get on board the *Barracuda*.' Turn to **66**.

You see three mutant Arachnids scurry out, each two metres high, with their heads encased by billowing tubes of fungus.

276

The woman shakes her head and says, 'You are wasting your time and as well as mine. You are not going to find such a sword in Arantis. Goodbye.' She shuts the door and you hear the lock turn. You bang on the door, but the woman does not come back, and you have no option but to walk back down the steps and head east. Turn to **190**.

277

The entrance to the nearest cave is smaller than the other two and you decide to go in. You are just metres away from the entrance when you see three mutant Arachnids scurry out, each two metres high, with their heads encased by billowing tubes of fungus growing on them. They are PLAGUE SPIDERS. The invasion is about to begin, and you must not let them escape into the world. Controlled by the Spider Demon's fungus, the loathsome Plague Spiders turn and accelerate towards you with their long fangs twitching in their hairy mouths ready to bite. If you are wearing a Ring of Fire and want to use it now, turn to **187**. If you want to fight them with your sword, turn to **98**.

278

The Guards are well trained in spear throwing, but four of the five spears miss you and fly past your head. One strikes your arm but luckily only causes a light flesh wound. Gain 1 LUCK point and lose 2 STAMINA points. You do not look back and keep on running as fast as you can. If you want to head north, turn to **241**. If you want to head east, turn to **290**. If you want to head south, turn to **263**.

279

Hacking your way through the thick undergrowth, you stumble across a skeleton in tattered clothing lying face down on the ground with a cutlass next to it that is broken in half. Its bony hand is clutching a leather pouch. If you want to open the pouch, turn to **13**. If you would rather press on, turn to **210**.

280

You are excited to find that the key turns in the lock. You open the chest and find a leather money bag and a brass canister inside. You open the bag and count out 45 Gold Pieces. If you want to take the Gold Pieces and carry on walking, turn to **53**. If you want to open the canister, turn to **391**. If you want to leave the Gold Pieces and the canister in the chest and walk on, turn to **345**.

281

You drop your backpack and dive into the horse trough and submerge yourself in the water. You hold your breath until you can no longer hear the buzzing sound before daring to sit up. You climb out of the trough, grab your backpack and decide what to do. If you want to run down the alleyway after the town crier, turn to **369**. If you want to walk on up the street, turn to **393**.

282

The Warrior looks up and stares at you fiercely. He raises his sword, but you can see that he is weak and in considerable pain. You tell him that you are not an enemy and perhaps you might be able to help each other. 'Tell me more,' he grunts. You tell him that you are on an important mission and have need of a Dragonblade. 'Help me bandage my wounds and I will tell you what I know about Dragonblades,' he says, slurring his speech. He slides down off his horse and sits down on a rock. 'Pull them out,' he says, breathing in deeply before biting down hard on a stick. His eyes widen with the pain, but you manage to pull out all the arrows and bandage him up. 'I was attacked by a raiding party of Snake People, but I fought them off. Didn't think I was going to make it but then you came along, thank you. I don't have a Dragonblade but I know where you can get one. There's a tortured soul by the name of Kenzo Mamoosh who lives alone in a small forge somewhere in the Swamplands where he crafts his Dragonblades. He toils day and night over his furnace until he's satisfied that the blade is pure. He only makes one a year. He then marches south many miles to the Lake of Sorrows where he rows out in a boat and throws the sword in the air, hoping each time that a maiden's hand might rise up and catch it before it falls in the water. He believes his fate is to make the perfect blade for the Lady of the Lake. Only if a blade

is caught by the fair maiden would he feel that his work was done. Sadly, it's all in his mind. There is no Lady of the Lake. His daughter drowned in the lake and for that he blames himself. The task is his penance. After he leaves, the Fish Men who live nearby scour the bottom of the lake in search of the sword until it is found. They get high prices for them. My advice is that you pay the Fish Men a visit. You might be lucky. It's that time of the year. Just make sure you treat them with respect. If you don't want to go to the lake, I'm heading to Dragon Valley if you want a ride on the back of my horse?' If you want a ride north with the Warrior, turn to **370**. If you want to keep going south to the Lake of Sorrows, turn to **397**.

283

While you were fighting the Wild Dog, your horse bolted and galloped back towards Halak with the pack of Dogs chasing after it. You have no choice but to set off again on foot. Turn to **163**.

284

The boatman pulls hard on his oars, and you glide over to the south bank. 'It's been nice talking to you,' he says cheerfully as you climb out of the boat. 'Enjoy your walk. You'll pass by a beautiful inlet called Freshwater Bay, and if you keep going south, you'll end up at the Ruins of Rabuskar. You'd never catch me going there mind you. They are haunted!' You say goodbye to the boatman and set off again on foot, following the tributary south. It's beginning to get dark by the time you see the bay the boatman mentioned in the west, and you decide to look for somewhere safe to sleep. You find an old canoe on the riverbank and turn it upside down to sleep under. You make a campfire and settle down for the night and are soon fast asleep. Howling creatures wake you up from time to time, but the night passes without incident. You wake soon after dawn feeling refreshed and ready for the next challenge. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You gather up your belongings and set off at a brisk pace, heading south towards a line of trees that looks like light jungle terrain. Turn to **203**.

285

You drop to your knees, exhausted after the fight. You take your time to recover and when you feel ready, you walk slowly into the cave. Turn to **92**.

286

The Goblins see you grab the hilt of your sword and realize that you mean business. They pat down their pockets, shrug their shoulders, and tell you they don't have any Gold Pieces. Unconvinced, you brush the cloth hats off their heads, which fall on to the table. A leather purse hidden under one of their hats also falls on the table and jingles on landing. You stare fiercely at the Goblins and pick up the purse. It contains 3 Copper Pieces and 3 Gold Pieces, which you put in your pocket. If you want to walk over to the bar to talk to the barman, turn to **235**. If you want to leave the inn and head east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

287

A search of the Goblin's clothes yields nothing more than two Copper Pieces. You pick up his warhammer and decide to take it. If you want to enter the mine, turn to **37**. If you want to continue your quest, turn to **254**.

288

There is a river at the bottom of the ravine, which looks impossible to climb down, and you carry on walking south-east along the ridge. With the light quickly fading, you look around to see if there is anywhere to shelter before it gets too dark. You see a hollowed-out log, which you crawl inside and soon fall asleep to the rhythmic sound of croaking frogs, and the trills and chirps of insects. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You wake soon after dawn feeling hungry. You think about eating one of your *Provisions* when you notice a thorn bush nearby with large bunches of shiny red berries hanging off it. If you want to save your *Provisions* and eat the berries, turn to **211**. If you do not want to eat the berries, you may eat one of your *Provisions* and then set off again along the top of the ravine. Turn to **233**.

289

You dash down the corridor relieved to have obtained your treasure so easily when you bump into an Acolyte coming the other way. It is the HIGH PRIEST. He looks startled, but quickly recovers and, aware of the theft, runs at you wielding two wickedly curved blades.

HIGH PRIEST *SKILL 10* *STAMINA 9*

If you win, you make a hasty exit through the archway into the courtyard before any other Acolytes come

running. Passing the fountain to the doorway, you close the door behind you and run down the path into the jungle to head east. Turn to **176**.

290

You pass more large houses along the street, which leads into a large market square full of people buying food and goods from the vendors and merchants standing behind their stalls. The market is buzzing with activity. There is a crowd of people standing in front of a small canvas-covered stage enjoying a puppet show. They shriek with laughter each time the Orc puppet hits the Wizard puppet over the head with its club. If you want to watch the puppet show, turn to **180**. If you want to look at the market stalls, turn to **351**. If you want to leave the market and walk back to the junction, turn to **325**.

291

You see Dragon Valley in the distance, which cuts through the mountains to separate Uron Heights from Craggen Heights, and you can also see the entrance to the Wormholes on the Uron Heights side. You hurry along and enter the first cave entrance you come to with your sword drawn. Turn to **92**.

Ahead, you see a dead tree where a bare-chested man is tied to the trunk.

292

With the trees and vegetation beginning to thin out, you make good progress through the jungle. Bright columns of light shine down between the trees. You are beginning to feel more comfortable when you catch sight of something move in the bushes ahead. You stop and listen, but all you can hear is the incessant noise of birds and insects. You suddenly feel a sharp pain in your neck. You reach up and pull out a small dart. If you have drunk a Potion of Health, turn to **80**. If you have not drunk this potion, turn to **182**.

293

You walk on, eager to reach the Wormholes. Ahead, you see a dead tree where a bare-chested man is tied to the trunk. He is a BARBARIAN. His skin is badly sunburned, and his lips are cracked and swollen. When he hears you approach, he slowly lifts his head and spits on the ground. If you want to cut him loose, turn to **35**. If you want to leave him tied to the tree and walk on, turn to **266**.

294

As the Guard lunges at you with his spear, you step to the side and snatch his gold earring, and run off with it down the street, leaving him howling in pain. You don't stop running until you are well out of sight. Turn to **263**.

295

You think about ways to open the cell door. If you are wearing a brooch, turn to **156**. If you are not wearing a brooch, turn to **30**.

296

The man looks at you with contempt and says, 'No. I would never sell my bow. What else do you seek?' If you want to ask if he has anything for sale, turn to **121**. If you would rather wish him well and carry on walking north along the west bank, turn to **49**.

297

'Meat pies!' he blurts out in a high-pitched voice. 'I'm delivering pies to the carpenters working at Afton House. I've got a couple spare if you'd like one?' If you want to take a pie, turn to **25**. If you want to decline his offer and go inside the inn to find the four men, turn to **268**. If you want to walk east up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

298

As you utter the words, a huge cone of fire shoots out from the ring and envelops the Plague Spiders. They all burst into flame and are quickly reduced to ash. Gain 2 LUCK points. You turn and head into the cave. Turn to **191**.

299

You urge your horse into a steady gallop across the grassland and are making good progress when you see something high in the sky. A huge TERRORHAWK is circling above you. It suddenly swoops down, screeching loudly, with its long, curved talons outstretched. You jump down from your horse to defend yourself.

TERRORHAWK	*SKILL 8*	*STAMINA 10*

If you are still alive after three *Attack Rounds*, you watch the TERRORHAWK bank away and fly off north in search of easier prey. While you were fighting, your horse bolted and galloped back towards Halak. You decide against chasing after your horse and set off on foot towards the trees. Turn to **91**.

300

The woman shakes her head and says, 'Never heard of her. Goodbye.' She slams the door in your face, and you hear the bolt slide shut. You bang on the door, but the woman does not come back. You have no option but to walk back down the steps and head east. Turn to **190**.

301

The Barbarian looks surprised by your reply and asks if you knew about the deadly dungeon that Baron Sukumvit built in Fang. If you want to say 'yes', turn to **251**. If you want to say 'no', turn to **272**.

302

An old man appears from the stairwell and walks slowly towards the counter, pointing what looks like a wizard's wand at you. 'Get behind me, Hazel. I don't want to see you end up being a pile of ash on the floor alongside this intruder.' The librarian hurries over to the old man and holds on to his arm. 'Get out or else!' he says angrily, watching you closely. If you want to draw your sword, turn to **209**. If you want to leave the library by the front door, you may either go back down the street and turn left at the crossroads to head east (turn to **290**) or turn back and go straight on at the crossroads to head south (turn to **263**).

303

You continue your walk along the bank and eventually come to a fork in the river. If you want to keep following the main tributary east, turn to **135**. If you want to cross over to the other side of the river and follow the smaller tributary south, turn to **386**.

304

Progress is slow walking through the dense undergrowth of the jungle. The warm, humid air saps your strength, and you have to watch your step as you navigate the tangled roots and the thorny plants. You press on resolutely, hacking your way through the hanging vines to the shrill call of colourful birds high up in the trees and the chatter of unseen animals. You step on what looks like a solid mound of earth, but it collapses underfoot. The mound is the top of a nest built by a colony of FIRE ANTS that pour out of the ground and crawl all over you, stinging you repeatedly. Lose 2 STAMINA points. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **207**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **72**.

305

Even with the Spider Demon slain, an army of rogue Plague Spiders could still wipe out everybody in Allansia. The best way to stop that would be to seal the cavern. You swing the warhammer hard against the wall several times, but it does little damage other than chip off a few pieces of stone. You suddenly remember there is a recess in the handle where a number would slot in. If you have a brass number, turn to that number. If you do not have a brass number, turn to **79**.

306

After paying the woman 1 Gold Piece, she covers her mouth with her hand and leans over to whisper in your ear. 'You need to find Kenzo Mamoosh. He makes Dragonblades for the Lady of the Lake.' She puts her finger to her lips as though what she told you is a secret that should not be shared. She turns to her friend and says with a wink, 'I've got the Gold Piece, so you can have the fish!' They hug briefly before going their separate ways, leaving you to ponder what the fish seller told you. If you want to walk over to the bearded men, turn to **373**. If you want to walk past them and carry on up the street, turn to **228**.

307

The man in the balloon looks surprised by your reply. 'Suit yourself,' he says sharply as he releases hot air into his balloon from a dragon-shaped stoppered jug. The balloon rises slowly off the ground and is soon no more than a speck in the sky. You set off again and decide to head south towards where the jungle looks to be less dense. Turn to **203**.

308

The fisherman pulls up the anchor and sets sail. He tells you his name is Pinn and entertains you with exaggerated tales about his life at sea. You decide to tell him about your mission and ask him if he knows where to find Arrika Root. He slaps his hand on his thigh and says, 'I do! Talk to the Medicine Man who lives near the river estuary. You'll recognize his hut by the two woven baskets outside the front door.' You sit back to enjoy the pleasant sail along the coast when suddenly the boat starts to rock violently from side-to-side. A huge tentacle slides over the side of the boat and wraps around Pinn, pulling him overboard, and you see him disappear under the water without a trace. Gripped in the tentacles of a GIANT OCTOPUS, the boat starts to tip over. If you want to cling on to the mast, turn to **136**. If you want to dive into the water, turn to **100**.

It's a creature with tiny eyes and a wide, fanged mouth, and its head and back are covered with long needle-like quills.

309

You pick up the pace, walking through the arid landscape, but stop in your tracks when you see what you think is a bush move. For a moment you think it is a trick of the light but then you see it rise up. It's not a bush but a dark-green creature with tiny eyes and a wide, fanged mouth. Its head and back are covered with long needle-like quills. It is a vicious THORNBACK FIEND. It hesitates for a moment, sniffing the air, before rushing forward and releasing a hail of quills at you. Roll one die to determine how many of its poison-tipped quills hit you and reduce your STAMINA points total by the number rolled. If you are still alive, you must fight the fierce creature, which attacks you with its long, slashing claws.

THORNBACK FIEND *SKILL 8* *STAMINA 5*

In addition to using its claws, the Thornback will fire more quills at you during each *Attack Round*. You must roll one die to determine how many quills hit you each round, reducing your STAMINA points total by the number rolled. If you win, turn to **333**.

310

You say goodbye to the fisherman and start your walk around the island, sword in hand. The beach is narrow, and you keep a watchful eye on the undergrowth for predators that could leap out and attack you, but you see nothing apart from some paw prints in the sand. You walk on until a high bank of rocks stops you from going any further along the beach, and you have no choice but to head inland. Turn to **210**.

311

You wade slowly over to the middle of the river and look over the edge of the waterfall where you see white clouds of spray drifting up. With the roar of the foaming waters in your ears, you ready yourself and jump feet-first off the edge. Roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **58**. If the number rolled is greater than your SKILL score, turn to **151**.

312

You stride towards the swarm, manically swinging your sword. You cut down eleven Plague Spiders before you are overrun and trampled underfoot. You are semi-conscious and unable to defend yourself when the swarm starts to feed on your flesh. Your adventure ends here.

313

The barman looks at you suspiciously and asks you to tell him more. You explain that Nicodemus has sent you on a demon-slaying mission to save Allansia and you have come to Kaynlesh-Ma to buy a Ring of Fire. He exhales sharply through pursed lips and says, 'Nicodemus you say? It must be serious then. I don't have much information to give you, but I can tell you that the merchants in Kaynlesh-Ma who sell magic rings all have long beards and wear long blue robes.' You thank the barman for his help and leave the inn to head east along the cobbled street. Turn to **89**.

314

Vargas looks puzzled and says, 'You can have it with pleasure, but I thought you were in a hurry?' You tell him that you need a shield more than you need to save a bit of time getting to Shazâar. He shrugs his shoulders and hands you his shield with a smile. Add 1 to your *Attack Strength* when you use the shield during combat. Turn to **382**.

315

The Giant Snake squeezes itself tighter around your chest making you gasp for air. It slowly increases its grip on you until you pass out before beginning the task of swallowing you whole. Your adventure ends here.

316

You cup your mouth with both hands and call for help as loudly as you can. Unfortunately, the wind is coming from the east, and your cry for help goes unheard by the fisherman. He waits patiently for you, but when the sun is directly overhead, he unfurls his sail and sets a course back to the mainland, leaving you behind. You are up to your armpits in quicksand when you hear growling coming from the bushes. You worst fears are realized when a huge SABRE-TOOTHED TIGER bounds on to the beach, roaring loudly. There is nothing you can do to save yourself from the vicious beast. Your adventure ends here.

317

The arrow thuds into your shoulder causing you considerable pain. Lose 2 STAMINA points. 'That will teach you, you lousy looter!' the old man says, shaking his fist at you. 'Now be off with you before I call the guards.' You manage to pull the arrow out of your shoulder as the old man puts a hunting horn to his lips. If you want to attack the old man, turn to **153**. If you want to head north, turn to **241**. If you want to keep on walking east, turn to **290**. If you want to head south, turn to **263**.

318

You pick up the book and see that it does not have a title on the cover and is held shut by a brass clasp between the front and back covers. The pages are edged in gold leaf and there is a red silk bookmark hanging out of the bottom of the book. If you still want to open the book, turn to **183**. If you would rather put it back down and grab the other Golden Skull and make your escape. Turn to **289**.

319

The hermit closes the shutters on the window and shouts through the door, 'Be off with you or I'll summon another Minotaur! Do you hear what I'm saying?' You realize it is not worth risking fighting another Minotaur and decide to continue south deeper into the woods. Turn to **387**.

320

The corridor leads through another archway and into a domed chamber where you see a circular stone table in the middle laden with demonic-looking objects. There are carvings of small cloven-hooved animals, rat skulls, voodoo dolls with pins sticking out of them, pendants, a sceptre, two black boxes, a black leather-bound book, and a bowl of glass eyeballs. But the object that catches your eye the most is a tiny skull made of gold. Your heart starts racing when it sinks in that you have found a Golden Skull. If you want to search the room for traps, turn to **198**. If you want to snatch the Golden Skull and quickly make your escape, turn to **289**.

321

You gently rub the ruby and utter the words 'Three, two, one, fire'. A huge cone of fire shoots out from the ring and envelops the Plague Spiders. They burst into flames and are quickly reduced to ash. Expecting more Plague Spiders to appear at any moment, you get ready to enter the cave sword in hand. Turn to **65**.

322

You power through the water but come to an abrupt halt when a suckered tentacle wraps around your ankle. You desperately try to free yourself, but there is nothing you can do to stop yourself from being dragged down under the water by the Giant Octopus. Your struggles are futile. Your adventure ends here.

323

With the light beginning to fade, Yash asks if you are going to continue your quest or stay in Halak for the night. You reply that you need to keep going. Yamesh nods and says, 'We understand the importance of this mission, so my horse is yours to keep.' You thank the brothers for their help and mount your steed. You steer it through the narrow streets and leave Halak through the city gates. If you want to ride south-east towards the distant tree line of the jungle, turn to **299**. If you want to ride south, turn to **261**.

324

There are six bamboo huts built on stilts on the edge of the lake. The first two you enter contain nothing of interest to you, but you find a sword wrapped up in cloth in the third hut. You unwrap the sword but are disappointed to find that it's rusty and blunt with a perished leather grip and most likely found in the lake by one of the Fish Men. When you leave the hut, you are shocked to see six Fish Men standing outside waiting for you, each one with his trident raised. One of them speaks to you in a gurgling voice. 'We see there is only one of you this time. That was a mistake and you will pay for treating us with such contempt. A few days on the island should be enough for you to find out why it's called the Lake of Sorrows. Take the Raider away.' You try to protest your innocence, but the Fish Men won't hear any of it. You are forced to swim out to a small barren island in the middle of the lake where they shackle you to an iron ring that has been hammered into a boulder. All you are left with is your water flask and some bread. The days pass slowly and on the fourth day you hear screams coming from the village. You look up to see your worst fears realized. A horde of giant bloated arachnids on spindly legs, their small heads shrouded in tendril-like fungus, are swarming through the village, biting the Fish Men who stand in their path. The invasion of the Plague Spiders has begun, and you failed to stop it. Your adventure ends here.

325

You hurry back down the street to the junction where you see three City Guards interrogating a man near the statue of the warrior. One of the Guards keeps poking him in the chest with his finger with the man holding his arms up, protesting his innocence. You decide not to get involved in the argument and turn left to head south. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **16**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **381**.

326

The woman raises her eyebrows and says dismissively, 'Spider Demon? What Spider Demon? Who told you to come here?' If you want to reply that nobody told you to come here and that you were just passing by, turn to **8**. If you want to reply that a friend of hers told you to call, turn to **118**.

You walk up the steps, which eventually end at a massive vine-covered stone statue of a Warrior some twenty metres high.

327

You push on, battling through the thick undergrowth that is now virtually impenetrable. You think about turning back when you spot an almost hidden flight of weathered stone steps leading deeper into the jungle. You decide to walk up the steps, which eventually end at a massive vine-covered stone statue of a Warrior some twenty metres high. You walk up to the statue and see what looks like a real leather pouch hanging from its neck. If you want to try to climb the statue to reach the pouch, turn to **172**. If you want to walk back to the rope bridge to cross the river, turn to **368**.

328

Remembering Nicodemus's advice, you tell Gorku that you'll buy the Ring of Fire. You pay him 3 Gold Pieces and slide the ring on to your middle finger. 'To activate the ring, gently rub it with your thumb and say the magic words "one, two, three, fire!" and watch the flames shoot out,' he says reassuringly. He then turns to his friends and says excitedly, 'Right lads, the drinks are on me!' He opens the door, and you watch them rush inside the inn just as a young man carrying a large tin box walks out. If you want to follow the men inside, turn to **268**. If you want to talk to the man with the tin box, turn to **56**. If you want to walk up the cobbled street, turn to **89**.

329

Grizzle rubs his hands together and says, 'I seen that you had yer eye on it. It's a Doom Sword and sharper than that lump of iron you're holdin'. I stole it from a Barbarian – 10 Gold Pieces plus your sword and it's yours.' If you have and want to pay 10 Gold Pieces to buy the Goblin's sword, turn to **73**. If you have not done so already and want to buy his warhammer instead, turn to **170**. If you want to change your mind about buying something and continue your quest, turn to **254**.

330

The balloon rises slowly into the sky, and you begin to drift gently north-east over the Whispering Jungle and on towards Uron Heights. You feel relaxed and take in the panoramic views of Arantis, momentarily forgetting about the dangers you have yet to face. Vargas offers you a cup of cold tea and says, 'Why do you need a Dragonblade?' His jaw drops when you tell him about your mission to slay the Spider Demon and her Plague Spiders. 'We need more speed to get you to Shazâar fast!

Throw everything heavy overboard to save weight.' He throws three sandbags over the side before picking up his bronze shield. If you want to ask him to give you his shield, turn to **314**. If you want to let him throw it over the side, turn to **353**.

331

You trip over the bucket, sending it clattering down the alleyway as you land heavily on the ground, spraining your wrist. Lose 2 STAMINA points. The Giant Hornets swoop down and sting you many times. Roll one die and reduce your STAMINA points total by the number rolled. If the number rolled was 6, lose 6 STAMINA points and also 1 SKILL point. A wooden door opens on the left and you see the town crier who yells at you to come inside. You seize the chance and dive through the open doorway into his house. The town crier slams the door behind you to the unnerving sound of Giant Hornets buzzing around outside. 'That was a close one,' the town crier says, helping you to your feet. 'Those infernal Hornets keep coming back here terrorizing the place. Poor old Kevan the carpenter was stung to death last week. Horrible it was. Anyway, they'll be gone soon. I should introduce myself. My name is Sylas. Sit yourself down for a while. How about a currant bun to cheer you up? My sister baked them. Delicious they are.' If you would like a currant bun, turn to **120**. If you want to reply that you are not hungry, turn to **157**.

332

The Barbarian turns to you and says, 'That's a pity. I wanted to know what happened to him. I know he would have died a hero. But enough reminiscing. This is as far as I go. Goodbye.' With the cave entrance just a few hundred metres away, he walks off in the direction of Dragon Valley, leaving you to enter the cave on your own. Turn to **92**.

333

The quills are barbed and very painful to pull out of your flesh. Thornbacks are rarely seen and it's unfortunate that you encountered one. You see a helmet on a skull lying on the ground. If you are not wearing a helmet and you wish to put it on, turn to **225**. If you would rather leave the helmet and continue north, turn to **195**.

334

You walk on in semi-darkness and stumble upon an abandoned bivouac made from sticks and animal skins. You decide to sleep in it and make a fire to cook some mushrooms. While eating the delicious mushrooms (add 2 STAMINA points) you look up at the moonlit sky wondering what the next day might bring. Would you find what you need in time to defeat the Spider Demon? With that thought in mind, you crawl into the bivouac and lie down with your head resting on your backpack and soon fall asleep. The night passes without incident, and you wake soon after dawn feeling refreshed and ready for the day. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You gather up your belongings and set off at a brisk pace, heading south-east across the plain. Eventually, you see the coast away to your right and a river tributary on your left that appears to feed into the River Eltus. In the far distance, you can see a dense line of trees that looks like jungle terrain. You stop for a minute to think about which way to go when a large shadow passes over you. You look up to see a hot-air balloon slowly descending and watch it land with a bump on the dusty plain ahead. A man with a long white beard waves at you from his wicker basket and shouts, 'If you want a ride, jump in now. I can't keep this old gas bag on the ground for long.' If you want to jump in the basket, turn to **222**. If you want to turn down his offer, turn to **307**.

335

The Hawk Wasp stings you repeatedly as you scramble down the tree. The pain is excruciating and so intense that you lose your grip and fall to the ground. Lose 2 STAMINA points. The stinging pain gradually subsides, and you pick yourself up and head towards the temple. Turn to **134**.

336

You walk up the gangplank with Nicodemus shaking his head in disbelief. Two PIRATES grab you when you step onboard the *Black Pearl* and, without a weapon, you realize it would be foolish to fight them. Captain Shanklin appears from down below coughing and cursing, and says, 'Yer did well, Peggy. Yer learning fast!' He points at you and barks at his crew. 'Empty this fool's pockets and throw 'em off my ship!' If you want to fight the Pirates, turn to **43**. If you don't want to fight them, turn to **224**. If you want to call for help, turn to **354**.

337

You slip the ring on to your finger and feel a sudden rush of energy surge through your body. You are wearing a Ring of Power. Regain 1 SKILL point and 1 LUCK point. Pleased with your find, you press on south. Turn to **229**.

338

You tell the Fish Man that he should believe you and that it's a matter of life or death that you defeat the Spider Demon. You empty all the Gold Pieces from your leather pouch on to the floor and plead with him to take them. The Fish Man gurgles his displeasure and rejects your offer, calling it an insult. When he sees you reach for your sword, he raises a webbed hand, and suddenly you find yourself entangled under a weighted net thrown over you by another Fish Man. More Fish Men appear and you are dragged away and dumped in a pit. By the time you climb out, the Fish Men are gone, swimming in the Lake of Sorrows. Lose 1 LUCK point. Completely dejected, you make your way north to Dragon Valley in the hope that the weapons you possess will be enough. Turn to **309**.

339

Yash shrugs his shoulders and says, 'You must have your own reasons for not coming with us but let me share my local knowledge with you. If you keep going east, you will head straight into the Whispering Jungle and that will be very dangerous. If you head south, you'll soon reach the River Eltus, which you could follow all the way to the Sun Pools.' You thank Yash for his advice and say goodbye. Without another word, he tugs on his reins and his horse rears up and gallops off. The two riders are soon out of sight, and you think about which way to go. If you want to head east, turn to **186**. If you want to walk back to the river, turn to **22**.

340

You slide your hand slowly into the gauntlet, ready to pull it off should you feel any ill effects. But the gauntlet does not harm you. You have found the legendary Gorgon's Glove, which will aid you in combat. Add 1 to your *Attack Strength* when you use the gauntlet during combat. Pleased with your find, you leave the cave and make your way back to the beach. Turn to **86**.

341

With the venom still coursing through your veins, you quickly run out of breath and have to stop. Lose 1 STAMINA point. The man is soon out of sight and you decide to save your energy and walk on slowly up the street. Turn to **228**.

342

You drag the boat over the sand and push it into the sea. You clamber aboard, hoist the sail, and steer the rudder to set the boat on a course towards the estuary. A warm, westerly wind makes it a pleasant sail, and you make good headway along the coast. You are not far from the estuary when you notice that the boat is beginning to fill up with water. You sail on, hoping to make landfall before the boat sinks. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **2**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **270**.

343

You run forward with your sword raised to battle the screaming Demon. If your sword is a Dragonblade, add 3 to your *Attack Strength* during each *Attack Round*.

VALMORKA	*SKILL 14*	*STAMINA 18*

If you win, turn to **374**.

344

The Captain of the Guard orders his men to close in and attack you with their spears. You must fight them one at a time.

	SKILL	*STAMINA*
First CITY GUARD	*7*	*7*
Second CITY GUARD	*6*	*7*

If you win, the Captain of the Guard takes flight. You seize your chance and run south down the street. Turn to **263**.

345

You take a sip of water from your flask and head north along the coast towards the estuary. You soon arrive at the mouth of the river and walk on along the riverbank until you come to a bamboo hut with a roof made of long, broad leaves. There are two woven baskets on either side of the open door. Behind the hut there is a bamboo raft on the river tied to a pontoon. If you want to walk on past the hut, turn to **49**. If you want to call out to see if there is anybody inside the hut, turn to **166**.

346

The Lich was wearing a jewel-encrusted belt housing a huge ruby in the frame of the buckle. You place the belt in your backpack and walk around the ruins. Finding nothing else of interest, you leave the Rabuskar ruins and walk back the way you came, eventually turning to head east along the coast. Turn to **162**.

347

The barman reaches down and brings out a wooden club from under the counter. 'You ordered it. Now pay for it, or else!' he says angrily. If you want to pay the barman, turn to **248**. If you want to fight the barman, turn to **174**.

348

You reach over and lift the lid off the box and see it contains another Golden Skull! This one is slightly larger than the one on the table. If you want to take the skull out of the box, turn to **377**. If you want to leave it in the box and take the other Golden Skull and quickly make your escape, turn to **289**.

349

The Giant Snake manages to coil itself around your legs and pulls you to the ground. It wraps more coils around you, trapping your sword arm and squeezing your chest making it difficult to breathe. Lose 1 STAMINA point. If you possess a dagger, turn to **129**. If you do not own a dagger, turn to **315**.

350

You hurry back to the beach and are relieved to see the fisherman is still there, lying fast asleep in his boat. You wade into the sea and tell him to pull up his anchor and set sail. He sits up and looks alarmed when he sees you. 'You look like you are in pain. What happened?' he asks anxiously as you climb into the

boat. You tell him about your encounter with the dead Pirate to which he asks if you found any treasure. If you want to reply that you found some Gold Pieces, turn to **62**. If you want to tell him that you didn't find any treasure, turn to **218**.

351

You walk past stall holders selling fruit, vegetables, bread, fish, cheese, eggs and other foodstuffs, and stop at the spice stall where the old lady behind it hands you a small linen bag. 'It's salt, ducky,' she says cheerily with a toothless smile. 'It's yours to keep but I hope you might buy a bag of pepper for 1 Gold Piece and make my day?' After deciding whether or not to buy some pepper, you walk over to another part of the market where you see a bald man selling old curios. He invites you to take a look and says that everything on his stall costs 1 Gold Piece. The items that look the most useful are a brass compass, a magnifying glass, a silver spoon, a silver dagger, a brass key, an iron key, a small oval mirror, a length of rope, a flask of lantern oil and a bag of nails. If you wish to buy any of the curios, pay 1 Gold Piece per item and make a note on your *Adventure Sheet*. You thank the merchant and walk on to the end of the square where you see a man wearing armour sitting on a barrel in front of a heavy wooden door. If you want to talk to the man, turn to **245**. If you would rather leave the market and walk back to the junction, turn to **325**.

352

You squeeze past the bloated carcass of the Rock Grub and make your way down the tunnel, passing the new borehole. It looks like the Wormhole caves are all connected by boreholes. You carry on walking in semi-darkness until you can't see well enough to continue any further. You retrace your steps and walk back outside where you see three more cave entrances nearby. Not knowing when the Plague Spiders might hatch or which cave the Spider Demon might be in, you sit and rest for a while thinking about the dangers you will face. Gain 1 STAMINA point. You stand up and check your weapons and equipment, and get ready to enter another cave. Turn to **277**.

353

You watch the shield plummet towards the ground and disappear into the jungle below. Vargas lets out a cheer and releases more hot air into his balloon from his dragon-shaped jug. 'Shazâar, here we come!' he shouts at the top of his voice. Turn to **382**.

354

You call out to Nicodemus as the captain lunges forward and strikes you on the back of the head with the hilt of his cutlass. It's a painful blow and makes you feel dizzy. Lose 2 STAMINA points. From the quayside you hear Nicodemus shout, 'It would appear that I was wrong about you. If you can't defeat two puny Pirates, you don't stand a chance against a demon. I'm not helping you. I'll give you five minutes.' If you want to fight the Pirates, turn to **43**. If you don't want to fight them, turn to **224**.

355

You run at the Goblin, swinging your sword above your head. The Goblin turns to defend himself, standing ready with his glowing warhammer.

GOBLIN	*SKILL 7*	*STAMINA 7*

If you win, turn to **287**.

356

The woman gives you a stern look and says, 'The price of a Potion of Health is 2 Gold Pieces. Do you want one or not? If you do, I'll shut the door so you can drop 2 Gold Pieces into the slot. If you don't, I'll shut the door and bid you farewell.' If you want to buy the potion, turn to **39**. If you would rather walk back down the steps and head east, turn to **190**.

357

Apart from the sighting of a large eel in the river, the walk along the bank is uneventful. Ahead, there is a bend in the river where you see old bones and debris scattered about. You hear high-pitched squeaks and suddenly three GIANT RATS, each over a metre long, run up the bank to attack you with their sharp teeth and claws. You must fight them one at a time.

	SKILL	*STAMINA*
First GIANT RAT	*5*	*4*
Second GIANT RAT	*4*	*4*
Third GIANT RAT	*5*	*5*

If you win, turn to **24**.

358

You breathe a sigh of relief when you see that your wounds are all scratch marks caused by the Werewolf's claws. Safe in the knowledge that you will not turn into a Werewolf yourself, you put more wood on the fire and lie down again. Turn to **396**.

359

You utter the words but nothing happens. You say them again, but still nothing happens. You look closely at the ring and see that some of the gold has rubbed off. The ring is a fake. It's a gold-plated copper ring and the stone is red glass. You toss it on the ground and draw your sword. Turn to **312**.

360

You run up the steps and open the door to a large, high-ceilinged room lined with rows of bookshelves, which are filled with musty-smelling leather-bound books and linen-backed folders. A stairwell at the back leads down to a basement. There is nobody in the library apart from the librarian, who is a little old lady sitting on a stool inside a square counter, on which there is a pile of books and a brass bell. She is wearing gold-rimmed spectacles, and her silver-grey hair is tied back tightly in a bun. She peers at you over her spectacles and says, 'Good afternoon. It is so nice to see a new face in the library. How can I help you?' If you want to ask if she has any books on demons, turn to **185**. If you want to ask if she has any maps of Arantis, turn to **158**. If you want to ask if there is a back door to the library, turn to **194**.

It's a Dwarf lying on the ground, trapped in the huge coils of a Giant Snake.

361

The hermit looks pleased that you have something to trade. 'I'm a fair man. I'll trade an item for an item. One for one, two for two, three for three or four for four – I don't mind which.' Make a note of the items you trade on your *Adventure Sheet*. Turn to **148**.

362

You hurry as fast as you can through undergrowth, hacking your way through hanging vines and long ferns, with the cries for help sounding increasingly desperate. You push on and soon see who it is who is in trouble. It's a DWARF lying on the ground, trapped in the huge coils of a GIANT SNAKE. You see fear in his eyes, and he looks to be in terrible pain as the Snake tightens its grip. Now struggling for breath, he begs you to free him. If you want to attack the Snake, turn to **130**. If you want to leave the Dwarf to fend for himself and head south, turn to **232**.

363

The woman shakes her head and says, 'Never heard of him. Goodbye.' She slams the door in your face, and you hear the bolt slide shut. You bang on the door, but the woman does not come back. You have no option but to walk back down the steps and head east. Turn to **190**.

364

The second Goblin hands you two dice and spins a coin in the air, saying, 'Call it, brother.' 'Heads!' comes the reply. 'Heads it is, brother. You gets to go rolling the bones first.' The Goblin shakes his dice and rolls them across the tabletop. 'Double six! I wins,' he shouts victoriously holding out his hand for you to give him a Gold Piece. If you want to pay him, turn to **214**. If you want to challenge him, turn to **139**.

365

You panic when you see the deep bite mark on your arm. If you are chewing Arrika Root, turn to **230**. If you have not been chewing Arrika Root, turn to **206**.

366

You climb into the rowing boat and pay the boatman 1 Gold Piece. He unties the boat from its mooring and pushes off. 'This old river runs all the way to the Whispering Jungle, which is the tree line you can see in the far distance. It's not a place for the faint-hearted but it's worth going there just to see the Sun Pools. Do you have any questions?' he asks enthusiastically, slipping the oars into the water. If you want to ask him if he knows where to find Arrika Root, turn to **221**. If you want to ask him about the woodland on the south bank, turn to **155**.

367

You eventually come to a grass-covered clearing in the centre of which there is a towering red sandstone temple set back from the jungle. A stone pathway across the clearing ends at a steep stone stairway leading up to the main entrance of the building. Ominously, the path is lined with human skulls mounted on wooden posts. You watch from the edge of the clearing for a while and see two men appear wearing long crimson robes and feathered headdresses. Each has a long, curved knife tucked into their woven sash belts. You watch them walk across the clearing and disappear. If you want to hurry over to the entrance, turn to **213**. If you want to bypass the temple and head east, turn to **176**.

368

The bridge is made of bamboo and vines and looks sturdy. You step on to it and it begins to sway as you cross. You don't stop, and hurry across to the other side. The route north along the river looks perilous so you decide to head east into the jungle. It's a hot day. The air is clammy, which makes you sweat and your clothes stick to you uncomfortably. You stop to drink water from your flask and become aware of something moving nearby. The undergrowth in front of you is suddenly trampled underfoot by a GIANT LIZARD that scurries towards you, its huge fang-filled mouth open and ready to devour you. You must fight it.

GIANT LIZARD *SKILL 8* *STAMINA 9*

If you win, turn to **223**.

369

The narrow alleyway is mostly in shadow and is full of rubbish. You do not see an iron bucket until it's too late, and trip over it as you run. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **61**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **38**.

370

The ride north lasts most of the afternoon, which you spend exchanging life stories with the Warrior who tells you his name is Krill. You finally see Dragon Valley in the distance, which cuts through the mountains to separate Uron Heights from Craggen Heights. Krill points at the Uron Heights side. 'The Wormholes,' he says grimly. 'It's a maze of monsters!' You tell him to drop you off by the nearest cave. 'You must have a good reason for going in there!' he says, looking dumbfounded. You tell him to join you and save the world. 'I'm too beat up to save anybody right now. So, I'm afraid you are on your own. Good luck, you'll need it.' You jump down and bid Krill farewell and watch him head towards Dragon Valley. You draw your sword and enter the large cave. Turn to **92**.

371

While you were fighting the Wild Dog, your horse bolted and galloped back towards Halak with the pack of Dogs chasing after it. You begin to feel dizzy while you bandage the bite wound and break out in a raging fever. The Wild Dog was carrying a parasitic virus. Lose 4 STAMINA points. For your next battle only, reduce your *Attack Strength* by 2 during each *Attack Round*. Still suffering from the fever, you have no choice but to set off again on foot. Turn to **163**.

372

The wind gradually dies and veers west, pushing you east out into the Gulf of Shamuz. There is nothing you can do but lie on the raft and hope for another wind shift. Unfortunately for you, the wind does not change direction. You spend three days adrift at sea and are asleep when the raft is suddenly tossed into the air by an enormous sea monster. All you see as you fall back down is the monster's gaping mouth that gobbles you up. Your adventure ends here.

373

You walk up to the bearded men, but they pay you no attention. If you want to interrupt their conversation, turn to **131**. If you want to walk past them and on up the street, turn to **228**.

374

You step past the twitching body of the Spider Demon and walk on down the tunnel. It opens up into an enormous cavern where you see hundreds of giant Spider eggs lying on the floor. If you possess a warhammer, turn to **305**. If you are not carrying a warhammer, turn to **179**.

375

You reach tentatively into the hollow and feel ants crawling all over your hand, which start to sting you. If you want to reach further into the hollow, turn to **71**. If you would rather press on south, turn to **229**.

376

The boatman pulls hard on his oars and tells you about his life on the river. 'Twenty-two years pulling on these oars hasn't done my hands any favours, I can tell you!' he says chortling loudly, eager to show you the thick callouses on his hands. He rows on at a leisurely pace singing an old sea shanty until you arrive at a fork in the river. 'This is as far as I go my friend. Where do you want me to drop you off?' If you want to get out on the north bank to follow the River Eltus east towards the jungle, turn to **197**. If you want to get out on the south bank to follow the new tributary south, turn to **284**.

377

As soon as you touch the skull, it explodes sending small shards of jagged iron flying in all directions. Roll one die to determine how many pieces hit you and reduce your STAMINA by the number rolled. If you are still alive, you can either open the second box (turn to **201**) or grab the other Golden Skull and make your escape (turn to **289**).

378

Walking towards the beach, you feel a sharp pain in your chest. For a moment you think you have been hit by another dart, but when you look down, you see a large patch of blood on your shirt around where the brooch is. You rip the brooch off your shirt and crush it underfoot. You start to shake uncontrollably, gripped by a sudden fever, and feel unable to walk on. You drop to your knees and fall sideways, sweating profusely. Your head is pounding, and you think you are hallucinating when a pair of boots appear in front of you. 'I'm so sorry to see that you have suddenly taken ill,' a familiar voice says, trying to suppress her laughter. 'But on the other hand, I'm rather disappointed to see that you have destroyed my little gift to you. I'll have to have another brooch made now. At least it did its job. Or rather, it's nearly done its job.' You look up to see the smiling face of Roze who followed you here from the Sun Pools, waiting for the poison on the brooch pin to take effect. Unable to move, you can only watch on helplessly as the assassin takes your backpack and everything you own. You try to speak but cannot get any words out with your voice box frozen. She gives you a pat on the back and says, 'Never trust an assassin!' before walking away, leaving the brooch's deadly poison to finish its job. Your adventure ends here.

379

'A Ring of Fire?' Sylas says, looking a little bewildered. 'How strange you should say that. I bought one yesterday. Why do you want one?' You sense that Sylas is a good man and tell him about your quest. Sylas shakes his head, hardly able to take in what you tell him. 'Well, if you are willing to risk your life to save Allansia, the least I can do is give you my magic ring. I planned to use it against the Hornets if I ever got caught out in a tight spot, but your need is greater than mine, so please take it with my compliments.' Sylas slides the gold ring off his middle finger and hands it to you. 'When you want to use it, just rub the ruby and say the words "Three, two, one, fire". But not now though!' he says, chuckling. 'One thing I should warn you about is that it's a very old ring and has lost most of its power. It will only work once, so use it carefully.' You thank Sylas for the ring and tell him you must be on your way. If you want to leave immediately and walk back up the alleyway and turn left, turn to **393**. If you first want to ask him if he knows anything about Arrika Root, turn to **94**.

It's a gigantic Red Dragon flying towards you at speed.

380

The fisherman steers his boat towards the beach and throws out a rope, which fails to reach you. While he pulls the rope back in to try again, you hear growling coming from the bushes. Your worst fears are realized when a huge SABRE-TOOTHED TIGER bounds on to the beach, roaring loudly. There is nothing you or the fisherman can do to save you from the vicious beast. Your adventure ends here.

381

One of the Guards sees you and yells at you to stop. If you want to obey the Guard, turn to **177**. If you want to run off, turn to **238**.

382

Vargas keeps a watchful eye on the balloon as you approach Uron Heights, making sure that it is fully inflated. He smiles and says, 'It's made from the sap of blubbergum trees and has been known to spring a leak or two! We wouldn't want that to happen as we cross over the mountains now, would we?' But a leaking balloon is the least of your problems when you see something in the northern sky. Its long neck and tail and enormous wingspan are unmistakable. It's a gigantic RED DRAGON flying towards you at speed. It swoops in, roaring loudly, and spits out a ball of fire. If you are wearing a silver dragon brooch, turn to **113**. If you are not wearing this brooch, turn to **208**.

383

Unaware of the ring's evil power, you set off again on your trek through the jungle, which becomes increasingly exhausting. With the light quickly fading, you know you must find somewhere to sleep before it gets too dark. You see a hollowed-out log and stagger towards it barely able to put one foot in front of the other. You crawl inside the log and fall asleep instantly. The ring continues to drain your energy through the night until it can drain no more. Your adventure ends here.

384

You pay the fisherman and help him push his boat into the water and jump in alongside him. He hoists the small sail, which fills with the warm breeze, and you make the short trip over to the island in no time at all. The two mountains are steep and foreboding, protruding from the dense thicket of trees that covers the island. The fisherman drops his anchor into the shallow water off the beach and says, 'This is as far as

I go. I'll wait for you here until the sun is overhead and then I'm sailing back to the mainland, with or without you.' You grab your backpack and jump into the warm sea to wade ashore. Apart from the squawking birds, all seems peaceful. If you want to head west around the island, turn to **188**. If you want to head inland towards the mountains, turn to **279**. If you want to head east around the island, turn to **310**.

385

As you approach the men, one of them raises his hand, palm facing you. 'Stop right there! What do you want?' he asks in a gruff voice, with his eyes staring at you coldly. If you want to reply that you have come to Kaynlesh-Ma to buy a magic ring, turn to **34**. If you want to ask him where you might be able to buy a Dragonblade, turn to **161**.

386

You find a shallow part of the river and wade across. *Test your Luck*. If you are *Lucky*, turn to **169**. If you are *Unlucky*, turn to **15**.

387

It is getting dark and, with the shadows creeping in, the light is beginning to play tricks on you with the bushes and branches swaying in the wind. You forge on through the woods in the semi-gloom when, suddenly, a branch from one of the trees whips round and knocks you off your feet. A tree trunk shuffles forward, and you see a pair of tiny eyes staring at you angrily as you are hit again by another branch. Lose 1 STAMINA point. You have been assailed by a TREEMAN whose territory you have invaded. You must defend yourself from its flailing branches.

TREEMAN *SKILL 8* *STAMINA 8*

You must defeat the Treeman twice, once for each main branch. If you win, turn to **18**. You may *Escape* after winning any *Attack Round* by running off. Lose 2 STAMINA points and turn to **229**.

388

You pull and scrape the Mud Worms off your legs, but the heads of some of them remain embedded in your flesh. Roll one die to determine how many. It takes time to gouge them out and you are left with angry red marks on your skin. Mud Worms emit toxins that cause severe skin irritation and damage. Lose 1 STAMINA for each one. If you are still alive, you continue your trek, following the new tributary south. It's beginning to get dark by the time you pass by a large, beautiful bay over on your right, but you keep going south to look for somewhere safe to sleep. You find an old canoe on the riverbank and decide to turn it upside down to sleep under. You make a campfire and settle down for the night and are soon fast asleep. Howling creatures wake you up from time to time, but the night passes without incident. You wake soon after dawn feeling better and ready for the next challenge. Gain 2 STAMINA points. You gather up your belongings and set off at a brisk pace, heading south towards a line of trees that looks like light jungle terrain. Turn to **203**.

389

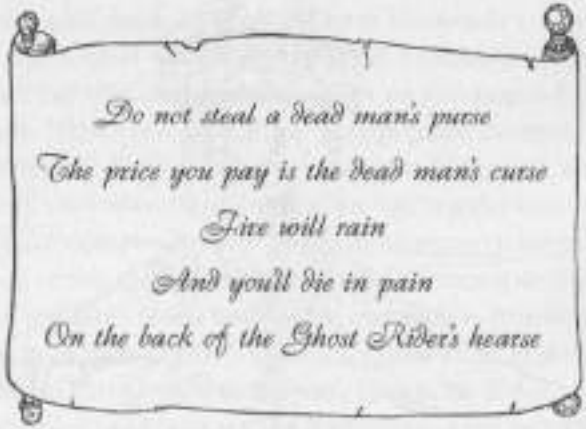
The sound of the thundering hooves gets louder with the dust cloud growing larger. You draw your sword and get ready to defend yourself as two robed figures, their faces concealed by head scarves, approach on galloping horses. The riders pull their horses to a halt in front of you. Steam rises from the flared nostrils of their steeds, which are breathing heavily. One of the riders jumps down from his horse and unwraps his head scarf. 'Sheath your sword. We come as friends,' the swarthy-looking man says, holding out his hand to shake yours. 'My name is Yash and this is my brother, Yamesh. We rode here from Halak, hoping we would find you. We come with an urgent message from Nicodemus asking that we escort you to the armourer in Halak. He wrote that it was concerning a special sword. As you can see, we have three horses. One is for you. Mount up. We must hurry!' If you want to ride to Halak with Yash and Yamesh, turn to **54**. If you want to politely refuse their offer and carry on walking east, turn to **31**.

390

Much to your horror, you find that the door is locked. You are immediately enveloped by the Giant Hornets and are stung repeatedly. Roll one die and reduce your STAMINA points total by the number rolled. If the number rolled was 6, lose 6 STAMINA points and also 1 SKILL point. You do your best to brush the Hornets off you and run down the alley after the town crier. Turn to **51**.

391

You flip up the hinged lid of the canister and pull out an old scroll rolled up on two wooden spools. There is a rhyme handwritten on the scroll in red ink that reads:


Do not steal a dead man's purse
The price you pay is the dead man's curse
Fire will rain
And you'll die in pain
On the back of the Ghost Rider's hearse

You put the scroll back in the canister and repeat the words of the rhyme in your head. If you want to take the 45 Gold Pieces and continue walking, turn to **53**. If you want to leave the Gold Pieces and the canister in the chest and walk on, turn to **345**.

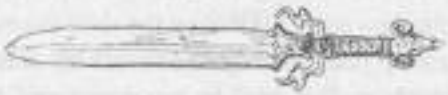
392

Expecting more Plague Spiders to appear at any moment, you get ready to enter the cave sword in hand. Turn to **65**.

Stone steps wind up the hill to the heavy front door, which has a large bell hanging above it.

393

You arrive at a four-way junction where a life-size bronze statue of a warrior holding a bow and arrow is standing on a stone plinth in the middle of a circular pool. The bottom of the pool is full of coins, including some gold coins, that people have thrown in over the years. A little old man leaning on a knobbly walking stick hobbles over and sits down on the edge of the pool. 'That's me, that is,' he says proudly, pointing at the statue. 'Hard to believe it I know looking at me now, but it's me when I was a young 'un fighting the Orcs. All the coins in the pool are going to be given to me next year on my seventieth birthday. You can contribute to it if you like!' If you have a coin and wish to toss it into the pool, turn to **253**. If you do not have a coin or do not want to toss a coin into the pool, turn to **29**. If you want to reach in and take out the Gold Pieces, turn to **205**



394

The Keep sits on top of a small hill. It's a square stone tower with an overhanging room at the top and a pyramid roof. Stone steps wind up the hill to the heavy front door, which has a large bell hanging above it. If you want to climb the steps and ring the bell, turn to **83**. If you would rather walk on past the Keep, turn to **190**.

395

You turn around and see the boy run off with his dog and the women go their separate ways with the one holding the bucket of fish looking very pleased with herself. If you want to walk over to the bearded men, turn to **373**. If you would rather walk past them and on up the street, turn to **228**.

396

You try to go back to sleep but are unable to do so and spend the rest of the night listening out for creatures of the night. You are still tired by the time the sun rises and gather up your belongings to set off south-east across the plain. You pass by an abandoned bivouac made from sticks and animal skins that is covered with dust and sand. You look inside but find nothing of interest. You walk on and eventually see the coast away to your right and a river tributary on your left that appears to feed into the River Eltus. In the far distance, you can see a line of trees that looks like jungle terrain.

You stop for a minute to think about which way to go when a large shadow passes over you. You look up to see a hot-air balloon slowly descend until it lands with a bump on the dusty plain ahead. A man with a long white beard waves at you from his wicker basket and shouts, 'If you want a ride, jump in now. I can't keep this old gas bag on the ground for long.' If you want to jump into the basket, turn to **222**. If you want to turn down his offer, turn to **307**.

397

You watch the Warrior slowly ride away, still grimacing in pain. He is soon out of sight and you continue your journey south. After a while you begin to feel uneasy as though you are being followed. You spin round several times but don't see anybody. If you want to hide behind some rocks to find out whether you are being followed, turn to **69**. If you want to keep on walking south, turn to **216**.

398

You are dragged away and locked up in a small cell that has a sand-covered stone floor and smells like rotten fish. You hear groans and coughing coming from the other cells. There is a small barred window high up one wall, which, when you stand on the wooden stool on tiptoes, you can just see the street outside. The days pass slowly and the only person you see is the mean jailer who brings you a bowl of slop to eat each afternoon. On the fifth day, you hear screams coming from outside and look out of the window to see your worst fears realized. A horde of giant, bloated arachnids on spindly legs, their small heads shrouded in tendril-like fungus, are swarming down the street, biting all the citizens in their path who begin to foam at the mouth. The invasion of the Plague Spiders has begun, and you failed to stop it. Your adventure ends here.

399

Larch looks a little surprised to hear that you no longer want the Witch's Rug. 'Make your mind up!' he says exasperatedly, rolling up the rug. 'I don't give refunds, so you'd better be on your way. Goodbye.' You watch Larch stomp back into his cottage muttering to himself and slam the door. You decide the best thing you can do is to set off south again. Turn to **387**.

400

You arrive in Port Blacksand two days later. Nicodemus knows of your imminent arrival and is waiting to greet you off the boat. The grand wizard Yaztromo is waiting there too. They clap and cheer as you walk down the gangplank and invite you to join them for afternoon tea. 'I'm rather fond of cakes,' Yaztromo says gleefully. You sit down at a table at the back of Happy Hanna's cake shop and tell the wizards all about your perilous mission while they quietly drink tea and eat their cakes. 'Allansia owes you a huge debt of gratitude,' Nicodemus says earnestly. 'Not only will your gold be returned to you but the amount will be doubled by the Kaynlesh-Ma city council, which learned that their citizens were not the most helpful while you were there!' 'And my old friend Gillibran told me you might be paying him a visit and that he would make it well worth your while,' Yaztromo says, smiling. Nicodemus hands you a parchment. 'It's your real pardon signed by Lord Azzur. Nobody in Port Blacksand will dare threaten you while you are here. You will be treated royally wherever you go. Enjoy it while you can. Blacksanders have long knives and short memories!' Your quest is over and, after a day of fun and festivities, you leave Port Blacksand, carrying your sack of gold over your shoulder. Looking across the dusty plain, you ponder where your next quest might take you and smile knowing that adventure and danger is what you live for.

HOW TO PLAY *TOMB OF THE GOLDEN SKULL*

You begin this adventure by being given a sword and a backpack containing a water flask and *Provisions* (food) to help sustain you during your adventure. Before setting off, you must first roll dice to record your SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores on your *Adventure Sheet* on pages 254–267, which you should use to keep a record of the items you find on your adventure. Use the adjacent *Monster Encounter Boxes* to record combat with the monsters encountered during the adventure. Write your scores in pencil or make photocopies of the blank *Adventure Sheet* and *Monster Encounter Boxes* to use in future adventures.

SKILL, STAMINA AND LUCK

To determine your *Initial* SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores:

- Roll one die. Add 6 to this number and enter this total in the SKILL box on the *Adventure Sheet*.
- Roll both dice. Add 12 to the number rolled and enter this total in the STAMINA box.
- Roll one die. Add 6 to this number and enter this total in the LUCK box.

SKILL reflects your fighting expertise; the higher the better. STAMINA represents your strength; the higher your STAMINA, the longer you should survive. LUCK represents how lucky a person you are; the higher your LUCK score, the luckier you will be.

SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores increase and decrease during an adventure, and you must keep an accurate record of them. Although you may gain additional SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK points during the adventure, your *Initial* scores may never be exceeded unless special instructions are given.

COMBAT

When you are told to fight a creature, you must resolve the battle as described below in a series of *Attack Rounds*. First, write down the enemy's SKILL and STAMINA scores

in an empty *Monster Encounter Box* and make a note of your own SKILL and STAMINA scores. The sequence of combat for each *Attack Round* is then:

1. Roll the two dice for your enemy and add the total to their SKILL score. This is your **enemy's** *Attack Strength*.
2. Roll the two dice for yourself and add the total your current SKILL score. This is **your** *Attack Strength*.
3. Whose *Attack Strength* is higher? If your *Attack Strength* is higher, you have wounded your enemy – go to 4. If the enemy's *Attack Strength* is higher, it has wounded you – go to 5. (If both are the same, you have both missed – start the next *Attack Round* from step 1 above).
4. If you wounded your enemy, subtract 2 points from the **enemy's** STAMINA score. You may use LUCK here to do additional damage (see Using Luck in Combat below).
5. If your enemy wounded you, subtract 2 points from **your** STAMINA score. You may use LUCK to minimize the damage (see Using Luck in Combat below).
6. Make the appropriate changes to either the enemy's or your own STAMINA scores (and your LUCK score if you used LUCK) and begin the next *Attack Round* (repeat steps 1–6).
7. This continues until the STAMINA score of either you or the enemy you are fighting has been reduced to zero (death).

ESCAPING

During certain battles you will be given the option to *Escape*. If you think you are going to be defeated, you may *Escape* but you must lose 2 STAMINA points as your opponent is deemed to have wounded you as you flee.

LUCK

At various times during your adventure, you will be told to *Test your Luck*. Luck plays a part in deciding what happens to you.

HOW TO TEST YOUR LUCK

Roll two dice. If the number rolled is **equal to** or **less than** your current LUCK score, you have been *Lucky*. If the number rolled is **higher** than your current LUCK score, you have been *Unlucky*. The consequences of being *Lucky* or *Unlucky* will be found in the paragraph you are sent to.

Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. The more you rely on luck, the riskier this becomes.

USING LUCK IN COMBAT

During combat, you have the option of using your LUCK either to score a more serious wound on an enemy, or to minimize the effects of a wound the enemy has just scored on you.

IF YOU WOUNDED THE ENEMY: you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are *Lucky*, subtract an extra 2 points from the creature's STAMINA score (i.e., 4 instead of 2 normally). But if you are *Unlucky*, you must restore 1 point to the creature's STAMINA (so instead of causing 2 points of damage, you have only caused 1).

IF YOU WERE WOUNDED BY THE ENEMY: you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimize the wound. If you are *Lucky*, restore 1 point of your STAMINA (i.e., instead of causing 2 points of damage, it has only caused 1). If you are *Unlucky*, subtract 1 extra STAMINA point.

Don't forget to subtract 1 point from your LUCK score each time you *Test your Luck*.

SKILL

Events and items may alter your SKILL score. For example, a Magic Sword may increase your SKILL but note that only one weapon can be used at a time. You cannot claim 2 SKILL bonuses for carrying two Magic Swords.

Drinking the Potion of Skill (see Potions below) will restore your SKILL to its *Initial* level.

STAMINA AND PROVISIONS

Your STAMINA score will change a lot during the adventure. As you near your goal, your STAMINA level may be dangerously low, so be careful!

You start the game with ten *Provisions* (food) but they may only be consumed one at a time. Note that *Provisions* cannot be eaten during combat. *Provisions* each add 4 points to your STAMINA score. Keep a running total of your *Provisions* in the box provided on the *Adventure Sheet*. Remember to use your *Provisions* wisely.

Drinking the Potion of Strength (see Potions below) will restore your STAMINA to its *Initial* level.

Your LUCK score will change during your adventure. For example, you may find a lucky charm that adds to your LUCK score. Or an evil spell might reduce your LUCK score.

Drinking the Potion of Fortune (see Potions below) will restore your LUCK.

You begin your adventure with a sword and a backpack containing *Provisions*. You will find gold, treasure, weapons, armour and artefacts on your adventure. Not all items will help you on your quest. Some might even harm you!

You may also take a Magic Potion, which will aid you on your quest. Each bottle of potion contains enough for **one** measure, i.e. it can only be used **once** during an adventure. Choose ONE of the following:

- A Potion of Skill restores SKILL points to its *Initial* level
- A Potion of Strength restores STAMINA points to its *Initial* level
- A Potion of Fortune will add 1 point to your *Initial* LUCK score before LUCK is restored

Potions may be taken at any time during the adventure but not during combat.

There is 'one true way' through *Tomb of the Golden Skull* and it will probably take you several attempts to find it. Making notes and drawing a map as you explore will help you on your quest.

Not all locations contain treasure. Some contain deadly traps and creatures. There are several 'wild goose chase' passages and while you may progress through to your ultimate destination, winning is not guaranteed.

The 'one true way' involves a minimum of risk and even with low *Initial* dice rolls, you should be able to win through.

GOOD LUCK ON YOUR ADVENTURE AND MAY YOUR STAMINA NEVER FAIL!

ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL Initial:	STAMINA Initial:	LUCK Initial:

EQUIPMENT

GOLD PIECES: 20

TREASURE

PROVISIONS: 10

MONSTER ENCOUNTER BOXES

Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:
Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:
Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:
Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:	Skill: Stamina:

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I really enjoy travel and I've been lucky enough to have seen a lot of the world during my life. I caught the travel bug hitching around Europe in the 1960s and always looked forward to my next adventure. Some trips were a bit hairy, such as bussing around Morocco in the early 1970s, sailing across the Bay of Biscay in a force 9 gale, scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef, and climbing Kilimanjaro. Other trips have been magical, such as seeing the majestic mountain gorillas in Rwanda.

I usually have my notebook and camera with me, and some of the places I've visited and characters I've met on my travels have found their way into my *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks. A trekking holiday in northern Thailand in 1981 was the inspiration for the setting for *Deathtrap Dungeon*. But don't ask me where the inspiration came from for Port Blacksand in *City of Thieves*!

In 2025, I went on a cycling trip across Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. Electric bikes, of course – a necessity at my age. Cambodia is a richly historic country with its many temples. One of the reasons I wanted to go there was to visit Angkor Wat and Ta Prohm, the temples where scenes from the *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* movie were filmed. I saw the movie being filmed on the set in the UK when I was Executive Chairman of Eidos, publishers of the *Tomb Raider* video game, but I didn't make it out to Cambodia. However, I did twenty-five years later! I was spellbound by Ta Prohm, the so-called 'Tomb Raider temple' built in the twelfth century. Seeing it in its jungle setting with the massive roots of the silk-cotton trees growing out of the ancient stone ruins was a surreal experience.

I took the above photo of one of the entrances to Ta Prohm thinking I would use the setting for an encounter in the new *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook I was writing.

I just needed to work out who might emerge from the entrance and why. I was so mesmerized by the temple that I wanted to feature something similar on the book's cover. When I got back to the UK, I called Karl Kopinski, who I had commissioned to paint the cover and draw the pen-and-ink illustrations for the book. He'd already finished some of the illustrations but was still waiting for my brief for the cover.

Karl is an incredible talent, and I am a huge fan of his work. Born and raised in Nottingham, Karl was largely self-taught and has been working as an artist and illustrator since 1997. He creates incredibly realistic characters, full of movement and drama.

When I first met Karl, he told me he'd enjoyed reading *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks in his youth. That makes such a difference when briefing artists for *Fighting Fantasy* commissions. We worked well together from the start, which began with him painting the cover for the hardback collector's edition of *Assassins of Allansia* and later *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*. While *Assassins of Allansia* was Karl's first *Fighting Fantasy* cover, Games Workshop and *Magic: The Gathering* fans would have already been aware of his incredible work.

I sent Karl my Cambodian temple photos and asked him to paint a snivelling goblin emerging from the entrance, carrying a warhammer and a sack of skulls. His first sketch nailed it! And the finished painting is everything I could have wished for.

It has been an absolute pleasure to work with Karl again and I'm sure readers will enjoy his art and illustrations in *Tomb of the Golden Skull* just as much as I do.

IAN LIVINGSTONE
London, June 2026

FF
FIGHTING FANTASY